

# Wild



AUSTRALIA'S WILDERNESS ADVENTURE MAGAZINE

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Spring (October November December) 1989, issue 34





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Michael Hampton tentbound on Bogong.



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# The Greening of Australia

Editorial

## A new dawn for the environment?

▲ ENVIRONMENTALLY, THINGS SEEM TO BE happening at last. Australia, indeed the world, appears to be awakening to a new dawn of environmental awareness. At least, such issues have never been more in the public eye, or more the subject of debate. Whether there will be a lasting commitment, and results, or whether it will be tragically revealed as just a fad, is yet to be seen.

Whatever the outcome, two things are certain. If this new awareness *doesn't* continue to gather momentum, there will be no future. Secondly, every thinking and concerned person should rejoice at recent progress and welcome the promise it holds for drawing many thousands of people towards thinking of the future of this planet and maybe even *doing* something about it. Further, we should all redouble our efforts, for at best the way ahead is still long and hard.

The very fact that you are a reader of *Wild*, a lover of wild places and outdoor challenges, demonstrates that you are part of the soul of this country's environmental consciousness and the source of its salvation. Any sense of gratification must only fuel our efforts to permanently change the attitude of Australians while we have the chance.

That there has been an increase in public environmental awareness is beyond dispute. An anti-environmental government has been toppled by the 'green vote' in Tasmania, leaving the Green Independents holding the balance of power in this island State so dear to Australian bushwalkers and wilderness lovers. Governments, including the Federal Government, seem at last to be showing practical concern although, if its recent environmental planning statement is anything to go by, the Federal Government seems singularly unmoved by the plight of Australia's remaining native forests. 'The environment' has become a popular issue, with people clamouring for an opportunity to 'do something'.

A brochure distributed widely prior to publication of our first issue, in 1981, proclaimed: 'Wild recognizes its duty to support the responsible preservation of distressingly scarce wild places, to ensure that Australia's unique natural heritage is preserved intact for future generations'. *Wild* has consistently taken a strongly pro-conservation stance in editorials. For example, in *Wild* no 3, I suggested that a crisis point had been reached concerning the future of Australia's wild places, particularly forests, and called on readers to join us in supporting, financially and morally, the work of the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Tasmanian Wilderness Society (as it was then). In *Wild* no 4 (April-June 1982), I wrote

a spirited Editorial on the need to save Tasmania's Franklin River.

Since that time we have devoted countless pages to environmental issues, particularly in *Wild* Information and Editorials and through articles such as Tim O'Loughlin's acclaimed 'Minimum Impact Bushwalking' (*Wild* no 28). We know of no other Australian commercial magazine to have taken such a stand, not infrequently at a cost—in advertising withdrawn and cancelled subscriptions. We have also donated thousands of dollars in advertising, and cash, to the ACF, the Wilderness Society and other conservation organizations.

Having previously stressed our educational and inspirational role, we believe that *Wild* readers, more than ever, now need to articulate environmental options and solutions as well as mourn the impact of our greed. With the publication of Doug Humann's well-researched article, 'The Australian Alps', in *Wild* no 33, we have started a series of major articles which pursue conservation issues in depth. Murray Parkinson in this issue continues the series and considers the effects of wilderness management or 'enhancement'. In future, Tasmanian conservation issues and the fight for the forests of south-east New South Wales will be covered. With this issue we introduce a new department—the Green Pages—devoted to environmental concerns, and we have greatly increased our already substantial advertising subsidies to environmental organizations. In *Wild* no 33 we expanded *Wild* Information (now complementing the Green Pages). We have also increased the coverage of our popular Equipment department.

Constantly on the look-out for ways to improve *Wild*, we have other things afoot. Readers seem to appreciate the redesigned contents page introduced with *Wild* no 33. This issue we have introduced new *Wild* order forms and heavy, Australian cotton *Wild* and *Rock* T-shirts. Now bi-annual, and although selected for high commendation at the 1989 National Print Awards, *Rock* has been completely redesigned and is consequently enjoying an increased surge of popularity. As noted in *Wild* no 33, *Rock* binders are available, and the next *Wild* index, for issues 19–26, is in preparation. After a trial basis to subscribers only, we now offer a service to all readers whereby we provide photocopies of articles from out-of-print issues of *Wild* and *Rock*—see the order form in this issue. We also introduce automatic subscription renewal. If you subscribe by credit card you can now arrange automatic renewal—for the same period as your original subscription and at the rate applicable. This will not only be



Above, Chris near Rocky Plains Bay on Tasmania's South Coast Track.

more convenient for you (and you can cancel at any time and receive a full refund for any unmailed copies), it will eliminate huge paper wastage and save us valuable time and postage, leaving us with more resources to go on improving *Wild* and fighting for wilderness. Increasingly committed to computerization to improve production and administrative efficiency, we recently took a further plunge in to the space age with the acquisition of a fax machine—(03) 826 3787.

In May and June I made a brief visit to the USA to attend a magazine publishing conference in New York. I also took the opportunity to visit 'backpacking' and climbing magazine publishers in two other States. As a result, I returned to *Wild* with my head spinning and full of ideas. I hope you enjoy the fruits of that most invigorating and educational visit in future issues.

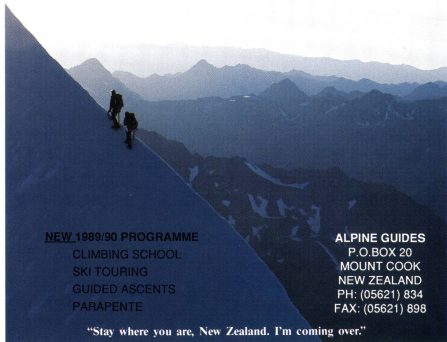
Just as I was leaving on that trip, I learned that the Australian Geographic Society intended to present me with its silver medal award for excellence, 'in recognition of the inspiration you provide to the adventurous through *Wild* magazine'. In my absence



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# Wild

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**Advertising** rates are available on request. Copy deadlines (advertising and editorial): 8 October (summer issue), 15 January (autumn), 15 April (winter), 15 July (spring). See below for publication dates.

**Contributions**, preferably well illustrated with slides, are welcome. **Guidelines for Contributors** are available on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope. Written submissions should be supplied on a five-and-a-quarter inch floppy disk suitable for an MS-DOS computer so that we can write it out as a straight text file or an ASCII file without rekeying. Hard copy should also be supplied. Submissions not accompanied by an envelope and sufficient postage cannot be returned. Names and addresses should be written on disks, manuscripts and photos. While every care is taken, we accept no responsibility for material submitted. Articles represent the views of the authors, and not necessarily those of the publisher.

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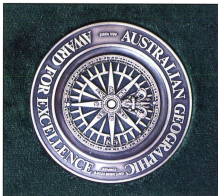
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SOC 238

overseas, I was delighted that my friend and co-founder of *Wild*, Michael Collie, was able to accept the award at the society's night in Sydney on behalf of all *Wild* staff, past and present. (The society's founder, Dick Smith, is on record as saying, '*Wild* is incredibly good...', and has long been an enthusiastic *Wild* supporter.)



**Above.** 'all that glitters...'; the Australian Geographic Society's 1989 silver medal awarded to Chris for his work on *Wild*. Glenn Tempest

I am very pleased to report that an already outstanding *Wild* staff has been strengthened by Nick Tapp joining the team as Assistant Editor. An experienced and active bushwalker, Nordic skier and climber, Nick brings considerable editorial and writing skills with him, as well as an uncommon knowledge of equipment. (He has just returned from a pilgrimage to the world's gear-freak Mecca.) His influence will be immediately evident in the Equipment column, Gear Surveys, Green Pages and elsewhere.

But it's not all good news. Australia Post recently announced, without consultation with magazines concerned and at short notice, a decision to exclude many publications, especially high-quality, relatively low-circulation specialist magazines of which *Wild* and the ACF's magazine, *Habitat*, are but two examples, from the Registered Publications service. When this takes effect it will raise the cost of distributing *Wild* to subscribers and specialist outdoor shops by some 300%—tens of thousands of dollars a year. In yet another attempt to maximize profits, Australia Post's justification for this extraordinarily ill-considered step was along the lines of: 'Anyone who can afford to pay \$5.00 for a magazine can afford another \$2.00 for postage'. Needless to say we, and the many other small publishers affected, don't intend to let the matter rest. One thing is certain, it will mean major increases in the costs of specialist magazines, including *Wild*. Let your local politician know what you think of Australia Post's action. We'll keep you informed of developments. But it may be prudent to subscribe, or extend your existing subscription, now—to insulate against enforced price increases. ▲

*Chris Baxter*  
Chris Baxter  
Managing Editor





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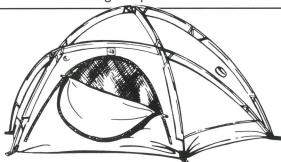
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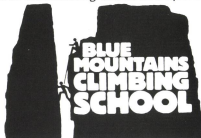
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# Australian Climbs Mt Everest

**Wild Information**

Mackenzie one of four to reach 8,872 metre summit

**The Warm Inner Glow.** On 24 May, four members of an international expedition led by American Karen Fellerhoff reached the world's highest summit, Mt Everest. Victorian climber, Roddy Mackenzie, delayed by a crampon which broke just after setting out from Camp Four, got to the summit at about 7.30 am, 30 minutes after Adrian Burgess, an expatriate British climber living in the USA, Sonam Dendu Sherpa from Solu and Lhakpa Noru Sherpa from Khunde, both in Nepal. The expedition left Kathmandu on 16 March and established Base Camp on 12 April. They



**Above:** Roddy Mackenzie, the latest Australian to climb Mt Everest. **Glenn Tempest.** **Top right:** view from the top; Adrian Burgess (UK), left, and Lhakpa Noru (Nepal) near the summit. **Makalu,** the world's fifth-highest summit, is the dark pointed peak on the left. **Mackenzie.** **Bottom right:** baa—Mackenzie flies the flag from the summit. **Adrian Burgess**

climbed the mountain by the South Col route and left on 31 May, a week after the successful summit attempt. There were no injuries or major illnesses, but equipment worth \$US20,000 was lost on the mountain owing to the sudden arrival of the monsoon.

Mackenzie is the sixth Australian to have stood on top of the world, following in the steps of Tim Macartney-Snape and Greg Mortimer in 1984 (see the article in *Wild* no 15), and Paul Bayne, Pat Cullinan and Jon Muir last year (see *Wild* no 31). Mackenzie and fellow expedition member, Peter Hillary, who was forced by weather to abandon his third attempt on Mt Everest, were sponsored in part by the Australian Wool Corporation. Roddy, the son of a Victorian wool-grower, carried an AWG flag to the summit.





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# STOP PRESS

The 1989 *Wild* readership survey is being inserted in a small number of randomly selected copies of this issue. If your magazine contains one of these surveys, please complete it and return it to us by 16 October. We rely on your response to help us in our continuing efforts to make *Wild* the magazine you want to read. Have your say!

## NEW SOUTH WALES

**Forest Enterprises.** A rain forest centre in Port Macquarie on the NSW north coast aims to market a newly fashionable product—rain forest conservation. The Sea Acres Centre, due to open in September, was funded by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Federal Government's National Rain Forest Conservation Programme, and consists of 1.25 kilometres of raised boardwalk varying from near ground level to six metres high in the trees.

According to a newspaper report, the centre is to be run by a private operator under the supervision of the NPWS. It is not stated whether there is to be a charge levied for admission or whether the operator's return will be generated solely from the kiosk in the main building.

**Ain't No Canyon Deep Enough.** In April, tiger walker Peter Treseder descended 26 major Blue Mountains canyons in one continuous effort of 83 hours 15 minutes, carrying all gear and covering all the ground between the canyons on foot. The canyons, in order of completion, were: Galah, Thunderstorm, Contradiction, Heart Attack, Surefire, Rocky Creek, Deep Pass, Criquey Creek, Bungleboori Creek, Dumbano Creek, Cesspit, Wollangambe, Bows Creek (North Branch), Bows Creek (South Branch), Claustal, Thunder, King George, Mt Jay, Fortress Creek, Arethusa, Alphius, Davies Creek, Kanangra Falls (Direct), Danae Brook, Carra Beanga and Thurat Rift. Treseder considers this to be one of the hardest trips he has ever done.

Then, in June, Treseder was off to northern Queensland where, with Warwick Blayden, Steve Irwin and Ron Moon(!), and vehicular support from David Moon, he made the first descent of the Jardine River. The Jardine is Queensland's largest perennial river and the largest undammed river on the eastern seaboard of Australia. It seems previous parties were thwarted by problems such as difficult access through thick rain forest and the presence of crocodiles. The trip began on Captain Billy's Landing Road in the Great Dividing Range and finished at the river's mouth in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

**Boreal Meanderings.** Information has been received concerning the Great North Walk, a route from Sydney to Newcastle. Developed by the NSW Department of Lands with funds from the NSW Bicentennial Council, the 250 kilometre walking track traverses public and private land, including four National Parks, seven State Forests and a number of other reserves. Further information is available from the Department of Lands, GPO Box 39, Sydney, NSW 2001.

A second annual four-wheel-drive-supported traverse of the track is being organized and led by Garry McDougall, one of the originators of the idea of the Great North Walk. Further information from McDougall on (02) 810 6429.

**What Drives This Man?** Our old mate, Jonathan Chester, Sydney-based photographer, journalist and mountaineer (see

articles in *Wild* nos 9 and 24 and Folio in *Wild* no 27), has recently been seen in full-page magazine advertisements endorsing a heavily promoted brand of Scotch whisky. In the accompanying profile, he attributes the urge to travel to the ends of the earth to a desire to be a long way away from his bank manager. We doubt said bank manager is complaining about this lucrative publicity for his itinerant client. Move over, David Frost; Australia's mountaineers are after your spot in the limelight.



**Above:** Michael Collie, right, accepting the 1989 Australian Geographic Society's Award for Excellence on behalf of *Wild*'s Editor, Chris Baxter, from the society's founder, Dick Smith. Australian Geographic Society

## VICTORIA

**Winter Classic.** The 1989 Subaru Winter Classic, in the latest of several incarnations, was held on the last week-end in July near Omeo, Victoria. A two-day event, the Classic comprises cross country skiing, running, cycling and white water canoeing. Results will appear next issue.

**What's in a Name?** Remember Mt Steadfast? Information, *Wild* no 22, noted that the third-highest summit in Victoria, a bump in the Spion Kopje spur on the Bogong High Plains, had no name. It was suggested at the time that a suitable name for the 1,891 metre peak might be Mt Steadfast. The newsletter of the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs for June and July reports that a submission has been made to the Place Names Committee to call the peak Mt Brookes after walker Stuart Brookes, whose many services to bushwalking include the well-known series of maps published by the Victorian Mountain Tramping Club.

The FVWC has also applied to have the track on the North-west Spur of Mt Feathertop named the Tom Kneen Track (see *Wild* no 19). The same newsletter quotes an article in the *Alpine Observer* newspaper which indicates that the change is likely to go ahead. Bright Shire Council having raised no objection.

**airotciV of emoC** A promotional pamphlet from Victoria, the Victorian Government's Tourism Commission, proclaims 'Give yourself a break...come to Victoria', and offers as inducement a double-page spread of alpine scenery under snow. On the horizon, the peaks stand out against blue sky—Mt Loch,

## Wild Information

the Niggerheads, Mt Feathertop and the Razorback. A stirring sight indeed. But wait a moment. Shouldn't that be the Razorback, then Mt Feathertop, the Niggerheads and Mt Loch? Incredible though it may seem, the State's tourism authority has turned its second highest peak and its neighbours back to front in order, apparently, that a snow gum in the foreground might not clash with the headline.

Ironically the same publication advertises Mt Stirling (see Green Pages), where '...Nordic skiers weave between the snow gums in to a silent landscape'. Is this a case of 'one good about-turn deserves another'?

## TASMANIA

**Cauldron Breakthrough.** Beyond the *au cheval* pitch at the bottom of Cauldron Pot, cavers from the Tasmanian Cavernreering Club broke through in to a substantial realm believed to be the Khazad-Dum stream. This makes Cauldron the fourth 300 metre deep cave in Australia and reveals yet another section of the Juneë-Florentine master system.

Stephen Buntan

**Ground Level Support.** A tally of rescues performed by the Tasmanian Police Search and Rescue Squad last summer shows that of nine call-outs, four were for ankle injuries. Most of these included people who had chosen to wear lightweight synthetic walking boots with little ankle support. The other rescues included a miscarriage scare, a person separated from their party, a strained leg case with complicating hypothermia and an injured surfer. One person drowned.

SB

**Video Goodies.** The internationally decorated film *The Tale of Ruby Rose*, much of it shot in the Walls of Jerusalem area of central Tasmania (see Information, *Wild* no 22), has been released on video and is available in video shops.

Director of *Ruby Rose*, Roger Scholes, has made two of three films newly released on VHS video by the Wilderness Society Education Unit. *Highland Winter* is the story of an elderly woman who lived in the Walls of Jerusalem during the 1920s. *Franklin River Blockade Film* tells of the protest action that helped halt construction work on a dam which would have flooded the Franklin River in South-west Tasmania. The third, *Gordon Splits*, widens wilderness photographer Peter Dombrowski at work.

## OVERSEAS

**Coast to Coast.** There was much speculation before the start of the 1989 Speight's Coast to Coast endurance event, which crossed New Zealand's South Island by bicycle, foot and canoe, concerning whether World Champion kayaker, John Jacoby, could retain his title from the previous year. In the event, Jacoby took more than half an hour off last year's record-breaking time to finish in 11 hours 27 minutes 19 seconds, 10 minutes ahead of Christchurch resident Steve Gurney, with Russell Prince, a former winner of the event, in third place.



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The lead changed several times among the 91 competitors, with rain, cold river crossings, illness, cramps and mountainous terrain all exacting their toll. Bicycles and kayaks alike sported 'pods', or wind-shields, in a bid to tame the event with technology, but an unexpected change of wind direction rendered these more of a hindrance than a help.

Jacoby, from Melbourne, was greeted at the finish line on Summer beach by what seemed like half the population of Christchurch, and won for his pains a four-wheel-drive vehicle and a return ticket to London.

Andrew Conway



**Above:** kayak fitted with 'pod' to reduce wind resistance, 1989 Speight's Coast to Coast event, New Zealand. **Right:** crossing the Deception River in the event. Andrew Conway



**Avalanche Death.** In July, prominent New Zealand mountaineer, Dave McNulty, was killed by an avalanche while skiing near Mt Cook. Ironically, McNulty was widely regarded as an authority on avalanche safety.

**Kiwi Skiing.** The Pisa Range, in the South Island of New Zealand, is touted as a desirable destination for cross country skiers. With gentle terrain on the top and sheltered valleys carved in to its sides, skiing is possible even in quite severe weather conditions. This year the area will have wide trails for skating as well as day facilities, ski hire, instruction and a ski guide service.

**The Owl and the Pussy-cat...** Four Victorians left Lae, Papua New Guinea, in August on a nine-week, 1,000 kilometre journey in sea kayaks round Huan Peninsula and across Vitiaz Strait to New Britain. They plan to make contact with indigenous people, many of whom have had little to do with the Western world, and to remain self-sufficient, surviving off land and sea for the entire voyage. A documentary film is to be made and will record scenery, wildlife and tribal existence. The kayakers in use have been developed for long-distance coastal touring by expedition leader Larry Gray.

**Social Climbers.** The highest formal meal on earth, a black-tie affair on the summit of Huascarán (6,890 metres), in the Peruvian Andes, went as planned (see *Wild* no 33).

Expedition leader Chris Darwin reports that after a period of acclimatization divided between the night spots of Cusco and Huaras and the high spots of the Andes, he and seven companions, only one an experienced climber, enjoyed a necessarily brief luncheon on top of their chosen peak. High altitude fare was provided from the first-class menus of Ansett Airlines and the Australian Chablis was well chilled.

The sum raised for the National Heart Foundation as a result of the expedition fell far short of the target of \$200,000, and the group planned another fund-raising event in August—an ascent the equivalent of the height of Mt Everest by walking up Sydney's MLC tower 31 times in a day. Donations for the Heart Foundation may be sent to The Social Climbers, 33 Hopetoun Street, Paddington, NSW 2021.

**Ice Walk Over.** Australian, Graeme Joy was one of eight members of an international expedition, led by Robert Swan (UK), who reached the North Pole in May after travelling over 800 kilometres on foot. The 56-day journey aimed to draw attention to matters of environmental concern; as leader Swan put it, 'to engage the public in their own quest for survival'.

**Caucasus Canoeing.** In May, a team of ten Australians going by the name of Team WATIR, or White-water Australians Toward International Relations, took part in a white-

water regatta on the Chuya River in the Soviet Union, living for the duration of the event in a 'tent city' among the Altai Mountains. The team was placed sixth in a field of 35, contesting slalom events on two separate courses, in four different classes of craft, over a period of five days. The competition was won by the Soviets. After this rally, a descent was made of a grade-six river in the Caucasus Mountains, 2,000 kilometres south of Moscow.

**Nepal Trek Routes.** The Government of Nepal has recently declared the Base Camp of Kangchenjunga, in the east, and the Dolpo region of central-west Nepal open only to professionally outfitted and fully supported trekking parties. The Rolwaling area to the west of the Mt Everest region remains off limits, despite some claims to the contrary.

**Mountain Flicks.** The fourteenth annual Banff Festival of Mountain Films will take place in Banff, in Canada's Rocky Mountains, on 3-5 November.

**Corrections/Amplifications.** A r m a n d o Corvini's name was misspelt in the photo caption on page 43 of *Wild* no 33.

Bill Bachman's name was misspelt in the J&H catalogue in *Wild* no 33.

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Send contributions to the Editor, Wild, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.



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GREAT ESCAPE

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# We're All Greenies Now

...or are we?

Green Pages

**The Green Apple Isle.** One of the most exciting events in recent Australian politics was the election to the Tasmanian Parliament of five Green Independent candidates—Bob Brown, Christine Milne, Diane Hollister, Lance Armstrong and Gerry Bates—and the subsequent formation on 29 June of a minority Labor Government with their support. A major tangible sign of a tide of positive environmental sentiment which has made a few reactionary commentators reach for a grab-bag of tired explanations, the success of the Greens was nonetheless hard-won. Conservationists were uniformly relieved at the failure of former Premier Gray's attempts to force another election rather than surrender power.



**Above:** Tasmanian hospitality? (Car with conservation stickers 'decorated' at Cockle Creek, Tasmania.) **Right:** Green Independent, Bob Brown's, house below Drys Bluff, Liffey, Tasmania. Chris Baxter

The agreement between the Greens and the Labor Government of Premier Michael Field provides Green support for key Labor legislation, subject to the terms of a public accord. It will not all be plain sailing, as the following report from Geoff Law, Tasmanian Campaign Officer for the Australian Conservation Foundation, makes clear.

**Labor's First Test.** Now that the Gray Government has finally gone, attention has turned to the minority Labor Government to see how it will implement the provisions of the Green-Labor accord. The accord is fundamental to the business, policies and survival of the new government. It stipulates the conditions under which Tasmania's five Green Independents will continue to support crucial Labor legislation, such as the Budget in the House of Assembly. In the new parliament, Labor has 13 seats, the independents 5 and the Liberal Party 17.

Labor's first test on wilderness issues is coming up. Final boundaries to the current 'Tasmanian Wilderness' World Heritage nomination (and new National Park) are due



by mid-September. Under the accord, the following areas must be added: the Denison-Spires area (including the Gordon Splits, Spires and Mt Curly areas, the Denison River, and the Prince of Wales Range); the Hartz Mountains National Park; the Little Fisher valley (a popular alternative walking track to the Walls of Jerusalem National Park).

Labor is also committed to considering the following areas for inclusion as a priority: the spectacular Eldon Range (just outside the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park); the Campbell River (immediately north-east of Cradle Mountain); the rain forests of the lower Gordon River (through which cruise boats pass); the wind-swept, lake-dotted Central Plateau and adjacent Forest Reserves (such as Meander Falls, Liffey Falls and Drys Bluff).

Meanwhile, the issue of Tasmania's National Estate forests rumbles on. Over the course of the next year, Labor is committed to an evaluation of alternatives to logging these areas. However, the World Heritage Bureau has already called for crucial wilderness forests to be protected—including the catchments of the Weld, Huon, Picton, Counsel, Beech and Gordon Rivers. The attitude of both the Federal and State Governments on this issue has been predictably timid.

Labor's early stance is similarly disappointing on two mining ventures, and the party seems less than keen to stop the activities of the Jane River gold mine (in the heart of the Wild Rivers National Park). The government also wishes to turn a blind eye to the Ida Bay quarry which is extracting part of the Exit Cave karst system—one of Australia's longest, with

over 19 kilometres of caves. Under the accord, both these operations should cease immediately.

It looks as if Tasmania's new Government will need as much pressure from conservationists as the previous one. Readers concerned about Tasmania's wilderness should not wait for Bob Brown to sort it all out. Rather, it's time to sharpen your pencils.

Geoff Law

**The Greatest Show on Earth?** Three weeks after the change of government in Tasmania and prompted, at least in part, by events in that State, the Federal Government unveiled a package of environmental measures hailed in advance (by the Prime Minister, at any rate) as 'the world's most comprehensive initiative on the environment'. Inevitably, the reality fell short of the preceding hyperbole. Welcome measures included the allocation of \$320 million over ten years to combat land degradation (undoubtedly a matter of grave concern), an ambitious plan to plant one billion trees during the next decade, and a \$4 million programme to save plant and animal species threatened with extinction. The creation of the post of Ambassador for the Environment, and the appointment of Sir Ninian Stephen to fill it, is a ploy which may deliver much, or very little. Most disappointing was the silence on the thorny problems that are so pressing and demand such prompt action, and often involve conflict between federal and State governments or between the interests of conservation and economic development. Conservation leaders deplored the absence of commitment on protection of National Estate



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forests, exclusion of mining from Kakadu and the catchment of the Alligator River, and reduction in the emission of greenhouse gases.

For all the disappointments, however, the Hawke Environment Statement does appear to take steps in the right direction. What needs to follow is further steps, and more difficult ones. Our governments, both State and federal, will undoubtedly continue to need our help along the way.

## NORTHERN TERRITORY

**Kakadon't.** In June, the ACF reported that the Federal Government was still to make a decision on the boundaries of the Conservation Zone—the area set aside for mineral exploration—in Stage Three of Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory. The Minister for the Environment, Graham Richardson, and the Minister for Resources, Peter Cook, are reported to take opposing views on the matter. The former apparently supports a larger National Park, which would protect the interests of the Jawoyn people, the traditional owners, as well as conserve the catchment of the South Alligator River. His colleague is said to be in favour of leaving the way open for future mining. The Prime Minister's position is not known. The ACF asks readers to write to all three at Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600.

## QUEENSLAND

**Cave Done In.** Following earlier reports (*Wild* nos 28, 29 and 33), the campaign to save the breeding grounds of the rare ghost bat in caves at Mt Etna, Queensland, has come to an untimely end. An action brought by conservationists against the cement company mining for limestone in the area, to have been heard in the Supreme Court on 13 June, was dropped and an injunction prohibiting mining in the cave lifted after conservation activists failed to raise the \$45,000 necessary as security against possible costs. Within days, on 12 June, the company blasted Speaking Tube Cave, a major breeding site for the bats and an area not, it is claimed, subject to normal mining operations. A representative of the company is reported to have defended their haste saying '...we really needed that stone'.

Attention appears now to have shifted to the handling of the affair by the Queensland Government, which has incurred widespread anger against it for allowing such environmentally Philistine activities to proceed. Will Queensland be the next State to host an alliance of Green Independent parliamentary candidates?

**Tropical Forests.** In better news from the north, a full bench of the High Court in Brisbane on 30 June upheld the inclusion in the World Heritage list of the State's wet tropical rain forests, including those in the Daintree region, in the face of a challenge from the Queensland Government. The federal Minister for the Environment, Senator Richardson, is reported as saying that this was the third time the Commonwealth's World Heritage Powers had been confirmed by the

High Court and that Queensland ought to negotiate with the Federal Government on future management of the area. The State seems determined to continue the fight for the right to log its wet tropics.

Wallaman Falls, on the southern edge of the World Heritage area, drop 305 metres in one fall, higher than any other in Australia. Since felling of forest in the region was banned in 1987, the unsealed logging track giving access to the falls through 40 kilometres of rain forest has been steadily returning to something like its original state. The local shire council, bemoaning the loss of jobs in the timber industry and unhappy at the prospect of depending on a shaky sugar trade instead, is pushing, with the support of some in the Queensland Forestry Department, for funds to upgrade and perhaps seal the road. At the moment neither authority has the resources to maintain road access, which they are reported to see as the answer to many of the area's problems.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

**Moratorium.** The New South Wales and Federal Governments have agreed to the institution of a six-month moratorium on logging in National Estate forests in the south-east of the State. The dispute over the future of the Tantaraungalo, Coolangubra, Egan Peaks and Yowaka forests, following the extension of the export licence for the Harris-Daishowa woodchip mill in Eden, was reported in *Wild* no 33. Since then, hundreds of conservationists have been arrested in peaceful protests and forestry operations have proceeded.

The July issue of the Australian Conservation Foundation's *Conservation News* and the daily Press reported a 2,000-strong series of demonstrations in the area over the Queen's Birthday week-end (June). These involved attempts by protesters to plant seedlings in restricted areas and an opposing blockade by logging trucks of the road being taken by about 1,500 protesters from Eden in to the Bondi State Forest, home of the long-footed potoroo and other endangered species.

The two governments, which had been unable to agree on environmental conditions for the woodchipping operation, have now decided to halt logging in 91% of the forests for a six month period to allow biological and other studies to be conducted. This may be extended on scientific advice. Both governments have retreated from their original positions, but the federal Minister for Resources, Senator Cook, is reported to have guaranteed that timber workers' jobs will be maintained even if National Estate forests—presumably the remaining 9%—have to be logged to do it.

**Blue or Green?** In a sideline, it was reported in the Press that singer and songwriter John Williamson, the originator of such anthems as 'True Blue', aroused an angry response from timber workers with the lyrics of an anti-logging song. Not content with writing and singing the song, Williamson planned to perform it in Eden and nearby Moruya, but was persuaded otherwise by his manager after

telephone calls from local residents made it quite plain how this would be received.

Williamson is reported to have pledged his share of royalties from recording sales to the Australian Conservation Foundation.

**Paved with Steel.** As foreshadowed in Information, *Wild* no 32, it was announced in May that work has been completed on an elevated steel-mesh walkway running five kilometres from the edge of the Thredbo lease area, near the Top Station of the Crackenback Chair Lift, to Rawsons Pass, 100 metres below the summit of Mt Kosciuszko. This work, carried out by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service over five summers, introduced 20 kilometres of steel pipe and angle iron and 3,000 sheets of steel mesh to the area. Steel was selected as the only material capable of surviving the winter snows, and was ungalvanized in order to avoid damage to alpine vegetation from leached zinc of the kind that scars the Horn on Mt Buffalo, Victoria.

The Kosciuszko National Park now also boasts a 90 kilometre network of poled, signposted cross-country ski trails, to be officially opened by the Minister for the Environment, Tim Moore, in September. Sixty kilometres of these have been built in the last two years. Two thousand snow poles, 3,000 reflective markers and 19 signs have been installed and four bridges built with the aid of helicopters and horses.

**National Park News.** In June, the NSW Government announced the release of a draft plan of management for the Barrington Tops National Park, north-west of Newcastle, a World Heritage-listed park and the southernmost location in NSW of the Antarctic beech. Under the plan, 28,000 hectares or nearly three-quarters of the park would be declared wilderness area. Other provisions include a proposed new system of access to four-wheel-drive tracks. The most environmentally sensitive tracks would be closed, while locked gates on others would be controlled by local four-wheel-drive organizations.

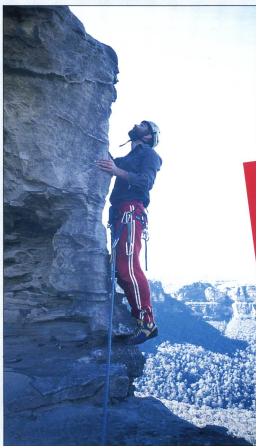
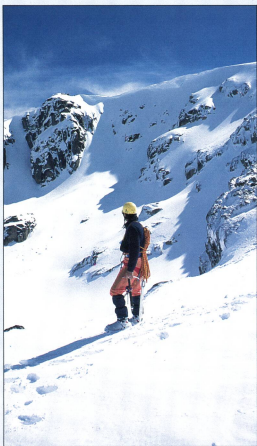
The draft plan is available free of charge from the National Parks and Wildlife Service in Sydney and from the office of the Department of Environment and Planning in Newcastle. Written submissions on the plan closed on 18 September.

The area of the Nalbaugh National Park, between the Nalbaugh, Coolangubra and Bondi State Forests, has been increased by the purchase of 342 hectares of tall eucalypt forest from a private timber company. This addition extends the park's boundary to the banks of the Wog Wog River.

**Toohey's Law.** During June, Justice John Toohey of the High Court was reported in the Press as having suggested a number of possible changes to the way in which Australian courts deal with environmental problems. The changes, canvassed in an address to the International Environmental Law Conference in Sydney, would hinge on an acknowledgement that damage to the environment is a matter of public, not just private, concern. The judge questioned the adequacy of common law, with its traditional



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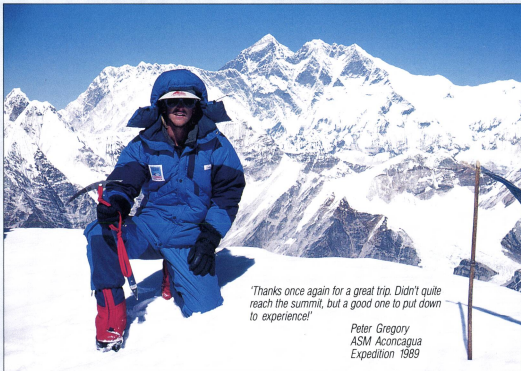
The Australian School of Mountaineering offers two expeditions to Mt Aconcagua, each utilizing a different route up the mountain. The first, in January, will attempt the reasonably straightforward Normal Route (Ruta Normal). While there is no technical climbing involved in an ascent of the Normal Route, the ever-present hazards of bad weather and high altitude still make this a challenging climb.

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concern for property rights, to protect the interests of the community at large in such matters. He also spoke of the American-developed doctrine of the public trust, which enables courts to limit the way public and private owners use resources such as the air and the sea. The judge said that acceptance of this doctrine would allow greater scrutiny of government action.

**Conservation to a T.** We have received a clipping from the *Toyota Four-wheel-drive Guide* concerning a course conducted in the use of winches in the bush. Two methods of securing a mechanical winch are described. In one, a chain is fastened round the trunk of a large tree. A photograph shows a few small pieces of wood between the chain and the trunk, with the heartening caption, 'And be sure to protect the tree'. The second method described is the T-trench. Another photograph shows a grim-faced instructor, in military-style boots and beret, presiding over a trench perhaps a metre deep and at least two metres long in two directions, accompanied by the caption, 'The course also emphasized the need for protection of the environment'. With friends like these...

## VICTORIA

**Wilderness Legislation.** The May issue of the Wilderness Society's *Victorian Wilderness News* reports the passage through both Houses of Parliament of the National Parks Amendment Bill, which aims to give legislative recognition to wilderness parks and zones and prescribes appropriate management requirements for the long-term protection of wilderness in Victoria. The bill bans mining and exploration in wilderness areas.

Also announced is the proclamation of the entire Cobberas-Tingaring National Park in the State's far north-east, following the withdrawal of mineral exploration leases. This gives Victoria a 646,000 hectare Alpine National Park continuous with the Kosciuszko and Namadgi National Parks in NSW and the ACT. Amendments moved by the National Party in the Legislative Council, however, include provision for seven-year grazing licences on public land, the establishment of logging in the West Buffalo River area, and the right of graziers and tour operators to reduce public access to huts on public land.

**Oil Spills.** Lawyer and lead singer with rock group Midnight Oil, Peter Garrett has enjoyed a flurry of media attention since his appointment in July as President of the Australian Conservation Foundation. Speaking on national radio following the release of the Federal Government's environmental statement, Garrett echoed many conservationists in expressing disappointment at the absence of real initiatives on forests, the greenhouse effect and the integrity of National Parks, especially Kakadu.

He saw the statement, however, as a step in the right direction by the government, and as recognizing the connection between ecology and economics. He predicted that within half a decade conservation would be a central concern of politics and expressed

great enthusiasm, as he has done in the Press, for the task ahead as ACF President.

**Stirling Effort.** Mt Stirling is the best cross country skiing venue close to Melbourne. Logically, Stirling should be part of the Alpine National Park, but the Victorian Government has now announced plans to 'develop' Stirling as a downhill skiing resort, complete with 5,000 beds, lifts, tows, car-parks, a gondola linking it with Mt Buller and a huge car-park in the Delatite valley. Tenders are being sought.



**Above.** Mt Stirling, Victoria's premier day-trip area for cross country skiing—slated by the Victorian Government for another major downhill ski resort. Nick Tapp

All this would mean the loss of Stirling as part of our wild alpine heritage; it would be a key loss.

At present, ski tourists explore Mt Stirling by dint of their own muscles and carrying what they need. The authorities want to tame Stirling, cocooning those on the mountain in the same creature comforts they have at home.

Downhill skiing is fun, but there are already enough resorts equipped for it. Ski tourists don't need their longer skis to get away from resorts, crowds and civilization. Ski touring is a fast-growing activity, and Stirling should be left for ski tourists.

Opposition to a resort at Stirling is growing, but it will take a massive effort to change the government's publicly announced plans.

Brian Walters

**Stepping up the Heat.** The Victorian Government's enthusiasm for the development of Mt Stirling seems all the more questionable in light of uncertainty and concern about the implications of the greenhouse effect. A letter to the *Age* newspaper from a long-time Mt Buller skier questions the wisdom of cutting down large numbers of trees in order to firstly create groomed slopes for alpine skiing, then to provide space for car-parks and other resort facilities, and then to accommodate increased road traffic as a consequence of the success of the project. All in the face of what may prove to be a diminishing supply of the essential ingredient—snow.

The State Opposition has been among those calling on the government to defer further action on planned developments at Mt Stirling, Mt Buller, Mt Hotham and Falls Creek (see Information, *Wild* nos 32 and 33) until after the preparation of environmental effects statements, and to remove the administration of the Alpine Resorts Commission from the control of the Tourism Ministry and place it under the Ministry of Conservation, Forests & Lands. Victoria's Tourism Minister, Steve Crabb, and Minister for Planning and

Environment, Tom Roper, are reported to have said that all necessary assessments of environmental effects, including greenhouse studies, will be carried out. At the same time, according to a spokesman, the Minister expects to call for tenders for the projects early in 1990.

**Vive la Diversité!** The World Wildlife Fund (Australia) recently launched a campaign aimed at encouraging protection of biological diversity, concentrating in particular on rain forests because of the extraordinary wealth of species they contain. The launch, at Melbourne's Southern Cross Hotel, focused on the diversity of the food we eat and was conducted by Gabriel Gaté, a well-known chef. A biologically diverse luncheon followed. The campaign covered short messages on radio and television and much printed material, including a handsomely produced pamphlet entitled *The Importance of Biological Diversity*. For more information telephone WWF officers Michael Rae or Lesley Ryall—(03) 650 7011.

**Point Nepean National Park.** Victoria's Point Nepean National Park is gradually being expanded and opened to visitors. All of Greens Bush (near Cape Schanck) has been acquired, and much of the area at Point Nepean itself is now available to public access on a controlled basis.

A policy of large scale development on the Mornington Peninsula over the past two decades has placed considerable pressure on the long and very narrow coastal strip near Melbourne which forms the park. Erosion, feral animals and noxious weeds are rife. In the 1960s, wallabies and other native animals



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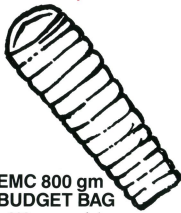
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could be seen along the coast, but now they are gone.

Careful management is required to look after the park (and hopefully to begin re-establishment of its original ecology). Visitors will need to respect some restrictions in order to protect this splendid coastline.

BW

GOOD GRIEF, SIMON: WHY DO YOU HAVE TO MAKE SUCH A BIG PRODUCTION OF EVERYTHING? IT'S ONLY A FAMILY PICNIC IN THE BOTANICAL GARDENS!



**Wilkinson Lodge.** For several years, the Melbourne Bushwalkers have been responsible for Wilkinson Lodge on the Bogong High Plains. In February, the club approached the Environment Protection Authority, looking for guidance as to whether the septic system of the hut needed upgrading. Arrangements were made to carry out improvements in the summer of 1989-90.

Then, in June 1989, after the first heavy snowfalls and with only a few hours' notice, the EPA placed an urgent pollution abatement notice on the hut, requiring over 200 metres of pipe to be laid before it could be used again. The pipe would have been very hazardous to skiers and much more likely to cause pollution than to prevent it. The EPA withdrew its requirement after investigation by the Ombudsman.

Rocky Valley Dam, the water supply for Falls Creek Ski Village, is polluted. The EPA and the Alpine Resorts Commission have known this for years. However, testing has shown that it is caused by cattle and horses, not Wilkinson Lodge.

BW

**News and Weather.** The Box Hill College of Technical and Further Education informs us of three new educational video programmes presented by television weather forecaster and environmentalist, Rob Gell. They consider

the greenhouse effect, the problem of salination and the weather, and can be obtained from Kim Johnston at the college's Television Production Unit—(03) 895 1380.

**The Urge to Write.** Many times, no doubt, you have been urged to write a letter to a government minister or other elected representative, calling for action on some matter of concern, not always environmental. Invariably, fewer letters are written than should be. In an attempt to increase response to campaigns, the Wilderness Society (Victoria) and the Victorian Mountain Tramping Club have recently tried a new tactic. They have made available writing material and relevant information through stalls or at club meetings, hoping to prompt the writing of submissions on the spot and thereby to forestall the inertia that so often defeats good intentions.

## TASMANIA

**Tall Timber Support.** Melbourne's *Age* newspaper reports that a meeting of UNESCO's World Heritage Bureau has recommended World Heritage listing for thousands of hectares of tall forest in central Tasmania. A report to the bureau also lent support to the planned listing of the Denison-Spines region, specified in the accord between the minority Labor Government and the five Green Independent members of the Tasmanian Parliament.

**World Heritage Mine.** Contrary to the stated policies of the Department of Lands, Parks and Wildlife, the Tasmanian Chamber of Mines, the Tasmanian Liberal Party and the Australian Labor Party, earlier this year the Federal Minister for the Environment, Senator Richardson, gave approval for the resumption of mining and exploration in the vicinity of the Jane River, part of the State's World Heritage area. Access to the mine would be along a four-wheel-drive track through button grass and scrub, which presents a fire hazard and attracts bottles, cans and other litter. Readers are encouraged to write to the Prime Minister, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600.

**Put it Out.** The Department of Lands, Parks and Wildlife has established Fuel Stop Only Areas, where camp fires are not permitted, at key sites within Tasmania's National Parks and Conservation Areas. The Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair and Walls of Jerusalem National Parks, the Frenchmans Cap Track and a number of areas in the South-west National Park (the Western and Eastern Arthur Ranges, Mt Anne, the Southern Ranges and the high camp on the Ironbound Range) are all included. A pamphlet available from the department also reiterates the importance of avoiding fires in alpine or rain forest areas, on peat soils and on days of high fire danger.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**Kraft Processed Cheddar.** The July issue of the ACF's *Conservation News* reports that the Western Australian Government seems determined to establish a kraft chlorine pulp

mill in the south-west of the State in the face of environmental and economic objections. The company involved is reported to consider the project barely viable. In addition, farmers, fishermen and others are concerned at the potential for organochloride pollution of air and water, and at the capacity of the area's water supply to cope with the demand for an additional 50-70 megalitres per day. Readers are encouraged to write to Premier Dowding, Parliament House, Perth, WA 6000, opposing the construction of a kraft chlorine mill and supporting alternative methods of paper production such as the recycling of paper pulp.

## OVERSEAS

**Antarctica.** The Australian Government has decided not to sign the Antarctic Minerals Convention and to campaign instead for the creation of a World Wilderness Park, reasoning that while the convention was better than no protection at all, it was both possible and desirable to push for more effective protection. This decision, in which Australia and France stood alone amongst the 22 Antarctic Treaty nations, has been widely applauded by conservationists. The task remains to convince the rest of the world of the need to preserve this last great wilderness. The move has bi-partisan support in the Australian Parliament, although a letter to the *Age* newspaper on the subject from Peter McGauran MHR, Opposition spokesman on science and energy, in which he accuses certain elements in the conservation movement of having 'gross simplification and generalization' as their stock in trade, leaves room for doubt about the Opposition's commitment.

**Fish-nets Shocking.** The Japanese Government has come under pressure recently in both conservation-oriented and mainstream Press not only for its continued practice of scientific whaling (see *Wild* no 33), but also for the indiscriminate form of ocean fishing known as drift netting, also practised on a smaller scale by fleets from Korea and Taiwan. Involving the use of nets 10 metres deep and many kilometres long, this method has been likened to hunting for deer by killing every animal in the forest, ensnaring as it does dolphins, porpoises, whales, seals and turtles as well as the squid and fish at which it is aimed. Prohibited in territorial waters by many Pacific nations including Australia, New Zealand and, ironically, Japan, drift netting is carried on far out to sea in unregulated, international waters.

The Japanese demand for timber is held responsible for a large share of the deforestation suffered by Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea.

Until recently, Japan was the destination of a very large proportion of the ivory exported from Africa, but has reduced imports by a reported 75% in the last few years—a sign, perhaps, of what can be achieved through international pressure.

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Send contributions to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.



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# Toddlers on the Track

Advice for bushwalking parents, from *Will and Carrie Steffen*

▲ **TAKING TODDLERS ON AN OVERNIGHT** bushwalk is a formidable task. They are at that awkward age of being too small to walk for long distances yet too large (and generally too active) to be carried very far.

When we asked some of our bushwalking friends about the 'do's' and 'don'ts' of taking toddlers (children between two and four years old) on an overnight bushwalk, many said, forthrightly, 'don't!' Yet many couples who have enjoyed bushwalking in their pre-child days don't want to give it up, even for two or three years, because of the arrival of a child.

Despite warnings, we have taken our two-year old daughter Sonja on several bushwalks, and have blundered in to many of the pitfalls that await bushwalking families. Here is some of what we have learned.

**What to take.** Small children are far more susceptible to hypothermia than adults so be sure to take plenty of warm clothing and waterproofs, even if you are walking in mild coastal regions. A spare set of pants, shirt, shoes and socks is well worth the extra weight and space. Insect repellent and, more importantly, sun block are essential. If you expect rain, a small collapsible umbrella is very handy. If your toddler is still wearing nappies, take plenty of plastic bags in which to wrap soiled ones for the walk out. Don't forget a spare dummy if your toddler needs one to sleep; it's easy to lose a dummy in the bush. If your child has special dietary needs, like soy milk, take a plentiful supply as spoilage can occur in warm weather. A bag of interesting munchies and finger food is a welcome diversion during the long walk in and out. Although it means extra weight, take a few favourite toys, such as books or stuffed animals—you will be thankful you did when you arrive at the campsite.

**Pre-trip planning.** Don't get your child excited too far in advance about the impending bushwalk. Children have a different perception of time, and next week-end is an eternity away. However, do explain the length of time you expect to be away, otherwise he or she may want to return home rather quickly. Don't promise what you can't deliver. Don't say that you'll see a kangaroo, wombat or cockatoo if you're not absolutely sure you will. And don't let your child choose that giant stuffed panda as a companion.

**Campsite.** The choice of a flat campsite seems obvious. Remember that for a toddler, flat means almost table-top flat. We took our daughter to a camping cave in the Budawangs which we recalled as being flat, but its floor was uneven enough to cause her great difficulty in moving around.



*Right, father and daughter Steffen. Photos Will and Carrie Steffen*



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  - Two models—Standard and Expedition. The Expedition is slightly wider and has greater baffle height
  - Three fill-weight options in each model to produce the best bag for the serious enthusiast's purpose

• **The Best Down.** A 650-loft, 95/5 Polish white goose-down. The highest fill-power used in any production bag we know of, anywhere! With qualities of superior loft, heat retention and longevity, this down is consistently 15-30% better than some very well-known Australian and NZ brands.

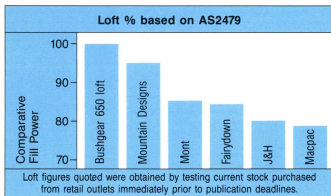
### The Price You Pay!

The price of a good-quality empty shell of similar design is approximately \$200. The price above that represents the down. Why pay an additional \$200 for 700 gms of down in the 500-550 loft range, when for only \$270, ie 17% more expensive, you can be lighter and as warm with 600 gms of 650 loft?

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Model Comparison			
Model	Fill wt	Temp*	RRP
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Black Ice Reg	600	- 12	478
Black Ice Reg	750	- 16	547
Black Ice Exp	750	- 15	587
Black Ice Exp	900	- 20	657
Black Ice Exp	1,050	- 25	727

\*Temperature ratings are indicative only, and will vary from person to person.





Grassy campsites are preferable to dusty ones, particularly if it rains. Avoid areas that have steep drop-offs nearby. Many campsites will be next to streams or rivers—children are fascinated by running water, so they can be entertained for hours. However, they'll need constant supervision as they can so easily slip, hit their head on a rock and fall in.

**How many days?** Long bushwalks, of more than three days duration, are impossible for her. We attempted a walk of four days with our daughter and, although she took it all in generally good humour, it was just too long. Three is a maximum, and then it is preferable to establish a single camp and use the middle day for a day-trip. A simple two-day walk, with only one night in the bush, will be quite an adventure for most children.

**Getting to camp.** Getting there is perhaps the most difficult task of all. Toddlers can't walk

very far, and if they do wander down the track, they can't see any point in rushing along when there are all sorts of interesting things (like sticks, anthills and feathers) which catch their attention every few metres. Carrying a toddler, on the other hand, can be a back-breaking experience.

One alternative, which we tried, is to take a pram. This option is of limited viability. The track, usually a fire track or equivalent, must be well formed and stable, so that a pram will not cause damage. Prams are designed for city footpaths, so the track must be exceedingly smooth. Even small areas of roughness, such as stones or patches of sand, can stop a pram. Larger obstacles, such as blown-down trees, can make them a definite nuisance.

So what about carrying the toddler? We have tried three techniques. The first employs

a pack, consisting of a light aluminium frame and a cloth seat, specifically designed for carrying small children on short day-walks. We then strapped light but bulky items, such as sleeping bags, sleeping mats and nappies, on the frame. The other adult was then saddled with a monstrous pack containing the rest of the gear. The second method is for both parents to carry normal packs, with sitting

## Baby on Board

Beverley Gilbert

▲ IT SEEMS SUCH A SIMPLE MATTER—LET'S TAKE the baby bushwalking. But beware, you cannot consult the baby to determine if he or she wants to bushwalk.

The mountains in Victoria's Alps provide spectacular scenery and the surrounding bush offers peaceful walking tracks. Harrietville, a small town in the foothills, makes an excellent base. It offers sufficient accommodation for the off-season visitor and is picturesque, with intrinsic charm.

Our family bushwalking activities started when my husband and I meandered alongside the Owens River with six-month-old Fiona in front of me in a sling. Normally she was happy with this intimate arrangement, but it was a warm afternoon and our two bodies, so close to each other, became unbearably hot. Fiona began to scream and any amount of patting and rocking did nothing to relieve her discomfort. By the time we returned to the township, she yelled her disapproval.

For our next attempt, we took Fiona in her stroller and walked along some unsealed back roads. The weather-shield on the stroller proved no match for a warm November sun, so delicate new skin had to be protected with a large golfing umbrella. It wasn't easy pushing a stroller and holding a large umbrella in exactly the right position. In addition, we had to lift the stroller over the occasional rutted or puddled stretch. By the time we arrived back at our holiday cabin, my husband and I wished that someone were on hand to wheel us around.

Mr Hotham turned on a strong wind and sleety rain the day we chose to visit its peak, even though Harrietville sported only dull skies and a whisper of a breeze. As we parked the car at the start of the walking track, a thick fog threatened to blow across the ranges. We could hardly subject our baby to these temperamental alpine conditions, even if she was wearing a knitted bonnet and 'ugg' boots. These clothes would be

inadequate in a heavy downpour or howling wind, while I didn't relish the idea of being lost in a fog with a small baby.

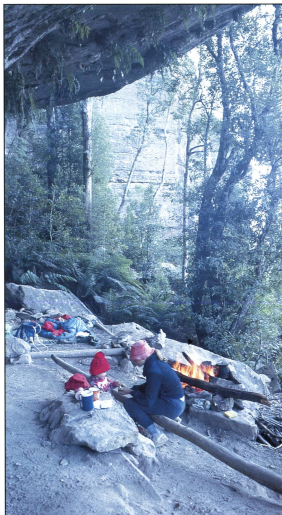
For our main bushwalking attempt we chose a three-hour walk through the hills to the Owens River. Baby was hoisted in to the rucksack and off we set. For the first hour, Fiona was quite fascinated with the passing parade of trees and she enjoyed the rhythm of our movement. When she started to get sleepy, she leaned sideways and her cheek came in contact with the cold hard frame of the pack—not a comfortable sleeping position. We folded a nappy as a cushion and she nodded off for half an hour.

Bushwalking with a baby on your back means you have to be ever-mindful of the delicate cargo. I had to bob extra low under branches to make sure that she wouldn't get scratched. Fallen trees were scrambled over, not under, and I needed to remember that she might suddenly lean to one side or put me off balance.

The baby was now awake and it was time for a drink and the usual nappy change. I surveyed the rutted track and the prickly, leech-covered undergrowth and wondered how I was going to manage this. Eventually, amidst a lot of confusion, I changed her while my husband held her in mid-air.

On the return journey we contentedly retraced our steps until Fiona began crying—no, not just a whimper but an earth-shattering scream. We tried giving her a dummy, put the rucksack on her father's shoulders, gave her a drink. Her screams persisted, and we realized that regardless of whether we liked bushwalking, she obviously didn't. So she cried for an hour and the ambience of the bush was shattered. All birds and animals were well out of sight when we passed.

By the time we walked out to in Harrietville's main street, Fiona had quietened down and taken on an angelic expression. I believe she knew in her own mind that her parents would now think twice before inflicting a bushwalk on her again. ▲



Above, mum and daughter enjoying the tranquility of a camping cave in the Budawang.

space in the top of one. We have found this less satisfactory as it is often difficult for the child to find a comfortable position for any length of time. The third option is for one parent to carry the child and the other to double-pack, that is, carry one pack of gear to the camp and then walk back to the car and carry another in. No matter which technique you choose, it's hard work.

**How far?** Considering the difficulties in carrying a toddler, five or six kilometres is the upper limit for all but the most masochistic of couples. If you are double-packing, a six kilometre walk means 18 kilometres for one of the adults, 12 of those with heavy loads. Even if you can manage more than five or six kilometres, your child may be fed up with the whole operation after a couple of hours. Remember, the idea is to have a good time



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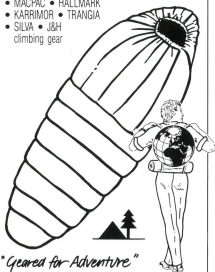
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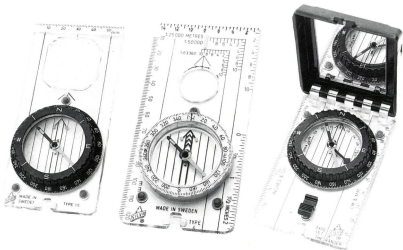




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## Wild Ideas

and show your child that the bush is interesting and enjoyable.

**Sleeping.** Take great care in planning the sleeping arrangements as a bad night's sleep can ruin the week-end for everyone. Although some families have individual sleeping bags for even their youngest children, we opted to put our daughter in with us. Our sleeping bags zip together to form one large bag ensuring that we could keep our daughter warm throughout the night (and only carry two bags). Also, many children are uneasy about sleeping in the bush at first, so being next to Mum and Dad may give them some much-needed security. However, we paid the price as our daughter is a very active sleeper and we were rather bruised and tired by morning. Most children are used to sleeping with pillows—a stuff sack of spare clothing makes an excellent one.

Whether you decide to put your child between you in your bags or provide him or her with an individual bag, be sure that warmth and comfort are the primary considerations.

**Activities.** Entertaining children is surprisingly easy—the bush is filled with a wide variety of interesting things so, with the curiosity of a toddler, there's never a lack of things to investigate. On one trip, our daughter spent several hours within a hundred metres or so of camp. She watched a ladybird crawling slowly across a mossy rock, hunted for skinks in cracks and crevices and had a session of cairn building (and knocking down) with a pile of small stones. I had planned to take her further afield, but quickly discovered that she was happiest just pottering along the track at her own pace. Don't make the mistake of organizing a walk to features that you want to see. The time around camp should be an opportunity for your child to discover the bush at his or her own level and pace. Brush up on your nursery rhymes and songs—learning new rhymes can entertain for hours during the walk in and out.

**Expectations and rewards.** Don't expect a bushwalk with a toddler to be anything like those rambles in the wilderness of your pre-child days. Even the very best of organization and perfect weather can't help circumvent the unavoidable hard work. A miserable trip in to the bush, one that has no time for your child to explore or play, can leave a bad impression that may take years to erase.

So, even if you do everything right, what are the rewards? At the end of the day, there may be an hour or two around the campfire when your toddler is sleeping peacefully and you can enjoy the evening's tranquillity. During the day, your child may help you rediscover the intrinsic beauty of the small everyday things in the bush. You may share in your child's wonder at experiencing new and exciting things, such as a sky full of stars whose brightness is undiminished by city lights, or a waterfall which mysteriously gushes forth from the top of a rock wall. Most importantly, there is the satisfaction of helping a youngster to enjoy and appreciate our unique and beautiful bush. ▲

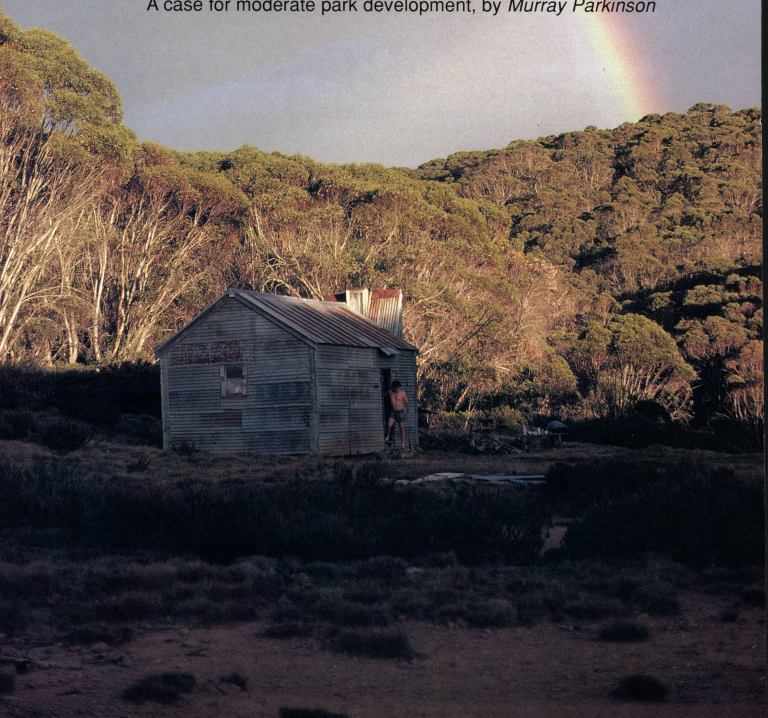
Will (see Contributors in Wildno 26) and Carrie Steffen lead an active 'outdoor life' based in Canberra. As well as activities in the nearby Budawang and Snowy Mountains they have climbed and/or trekked in the Himalayas and New Zealand, among other places.



*Wild Conservation*

# *Wilderness* ACCOMMODATION

A case for moderate park development, by *Murray Parkinson*





▲ LAST YEAR I VISITED SOME OF THE intensely beautiful parks of New Zealand's South Island and was blessed with good fortune—I walked the world-renowned Routeburn and Milford Tracks, and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. But coming from Australia, I was not accustomed to such a high degree of track regulation, and was forced to spend nights in overcrowded lodge-style huts, paying \$NZ11 a night to their Department of Conservation. Rather, I was accustomed to the minimum impact, tent-style accommodation of most Australian wilderness areas, and paying comparatively little for something I still consider my right: non-destructive free access to mother nature's fast-receding virgin realms.

In particular, I was troubled by the management of the Milford Track, Fiordland National Park (FNP), for which there were too many track huts, season walkers and servicing helicopters. My suspicion was that wilderness, and even conservation values, were being sacrificed in the interests of the tourist dollar. However, this illusion was largely the product of a fortuitous coincidence on behalf of the New Zealand tourist industry—the Department of Conservation wishes to appease public demand to walk the track, and believes that it has reached maximum carrying capacity, both socially and environmentally. This decision was made prior to the introduction of any user-pays system, and independently of commercial interests.

It is not my intention to be critical of the Kiwis in particular, though it is our right to do so because FNP is a World Heritage Area, and as such its preservation is the responsibility of all. Considering the size of their beautiful country, the declaration of FNP, covering an area of one million hectares, clearly demonstrates the virtue of Kiwi reason. No one will question the nobility of their words inscribed on the plaque affixed to the architecturally impressive FNP administration building in Te Anau:

*On the first day of December 1986 Fiordland National Park was inscribed upon the World Heritage List of the convention concerning the protection of world cultural and national heritage. Inscription on this list confirms the exceptional universal value of a cultural or natural site which deserves protection for the benefit of all humanity.*

The Milford Track represents an extreme example of what the future might hold for all the great wilderness tracks of the world; at present, it is the only New Zealand track with controls on visitor numbers. There is a trend in other countries towards increasing track regulation and the erection of wilderness huts. We must learn from existing park management strategies, and ask ourselves what form wilderness accommodation should take, and for



**Above.** New Zealand's popular Routeburn Track is as attractive but less developed than the nearby Milford Track. (Routeburn Flats from Routeburn Falls.) Murray Parkinson. **Left.** Round Mountain Hut, Jagungal area, New South Wales. Graham Tillott

what reasons. An immediate question which stems from the case of the Milford Track is whether there should be so many track huts.

▲ The Milford Track is a moderate 54 kilometre walk starting at the head of the South Island's largest glacial lake, Lake Te Anau. The track meanders up the Clinton River valley, taking the left fork to ascend Mackinnon Pass (1,073 metres), where spectacular views of the U-

shaped Arthur River valley, towering Mt Balloon (1,853 metres), and Mt Elliot (2,003 metres), with Jervois Hanging Glacier, may be attained on a clear day. After an optional detour to visit Sutherland Falls (580 metres)—the world's fourth- or possibly third-highest waterfall (this ambiguous ranking is determined by surveyors' conflicting measurements)—the track continues down the Arthur River valley, terminating at Sandfly Point on Milford Sound, actually a true fiord. There is no doubt that the Milford Track offers walking with inspirational scenery.

The Department of Conservation and the Tourist Hotel Corporation (THC) of







New Zealand both have a say in the management of this region of FNP, and they both service the track. Thus there are two classes of Milford Track walkers—THC clients who pay about \$NZ800 for a guided walk during which they lodge in 'hotel'-style huts, and carry limited supplies; and FNP independent walkers who pay considerably less—about \$NZ50 for 'motel'-style huts, though they must carry all supplies. But in practice, independent walkers can expect to pay about \$NZ130 because of compulsory charges for seemingly overpriced public transport and other facilities. There is no doubt that the Milford Track represents a commercial bonanza for the New Zealand tourist industry.

Due to the risks of avalanche and blizzard throughout the cooler months, the track season extends from early November to mid-April. A maximum of 80 walkers are permitted to start out each day. During last season, FNP put through 5,200 walkers and the THC put through 4,000 walkers. Such large numbers have resulted in some unpleasant development and regulation.

The track is rated as a compulsory four-day excursion, and all walkers must stay at specified THC or FNP huts on specified nights. There is little freedom associated with the experience, even for independent walkers who are in fact sometimes referred to as 'freedom walkers'. For me, the Milford Track is about a six-day walk, and I was strained attempting to fully appreciate the Fiordland environment in four days.

It is no surprise that the Department of Conservation has not zoned the Clinton and Arthur River valleys as wilderness area. Apart from the Glade, Clinton Forks, Pampolona, Mintaro, Quintin and Dumping Hut complexes, there is a hut at Pampolona Creek and another at Quintin, both used by track maintenance teams. There are shelters at Doughboy and Sandfly Point, an emergency shelter hut on Mackinnon Pass and an historic hut at Quintin, used only for tourist interests. There must be many more sheds and toilet blocks. There are even shelters at Hirere and Boatshed used as morning-tea stops by THC walkers. The Milford Track no longer passes through a wilderness area because of wilderness accommodation management practices.

There are over 315 bridges and board-walks ranging from very small to large. Though some must exist to make the track as easy a walk as possible, and virtually guarantee that anyone walking during a torrential storm does not drown, these structures do prevent erosion. Regardless, if there were not excessive numbers of walkers on the track, less track maintenance to prevent erosion might be needed.

One ranger 'putting us through' the Milford Track told us not to feed the keas (*Nestor notabilis*)—New Zealand's

lovable mountain parrot—because the immature birds develop a human dependency during summer and, when winter comes, they perish because they have failed to acquire essential survival skills. He suggested this as a possible cause for the decline in kea numbers at the Mintaro Huts area during recent years. Only research will determine

many great walks of the world—even a stroll through the local botanic gardens will do more for some people under some circumstances. But what most detracted from the quality of the experience was the profusion of people (at least one person for every 200 metres of track), aircraft and infrastructures, and the corresponding lack of personal



**Above,** a wilderness experience. (Cable Beach car-park, Broome, Western Australia.) Bill Bachman. **Left,** cogitating on the future, Frenchmans Cap, Tasmania. Ted Mead

whether the human impact on keas has been excessive.

There are two helipads and one airstrip on the track. During our day's walk up the left fork of Clinton River valley, one party counted ten helicopters, and three keas. The indiscriminate use of aircraft is in conflict with the recreational value of wilderness—the auditory and visual impact is clearly a disturbance to man and beast. The use of aircraft may be justified because of artistic, cultural, medical and scientific reasons. For example, nothing beats the use of a helicopter for emergency evacuations, but the frequent use of aircraft for ferrying supplies, rucksacks and tourists is only justified by commercial considerations. Perhaps there should be a minimum cruising altitude for joy-flights over wilderness areas.

Advertising hype has billed the Milford Track as the world's finest walk. As an experience, it is highly rewarding, but it does easily fall short of one's expectations. For a start, it is only one of

freedom and solitude. Round every bend there was something new, though all too often artificial. The destruction to the environment was obvious and saddening.

We also walked the Routeburn Track, and though we encountered a comparable number of people, it fared much better as an experience. This had little to do with the stature of scenery—it was because not as many human installations were obvious, the track was not a garden path and fewer aircraft were seen or heard. We had greater freedom to roam at leisure, and the opportunity on two occasions to more fully experience the mountains by camping out in our meagre tent. There was a greater sense of wilderness, and thus the environment seemed to be in sounder condition.

Wilderness accommodation is a long-term problem facing all the world's parks (and not just those with a severe climate). In Australia, commercial huts for guided walks have been established along the Overland Track in the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, Tasmania, our rival to New Zealand's overrated Milford Track. Ski villages in the Australian Alps demonstrate the extremely severe effects that wilderness







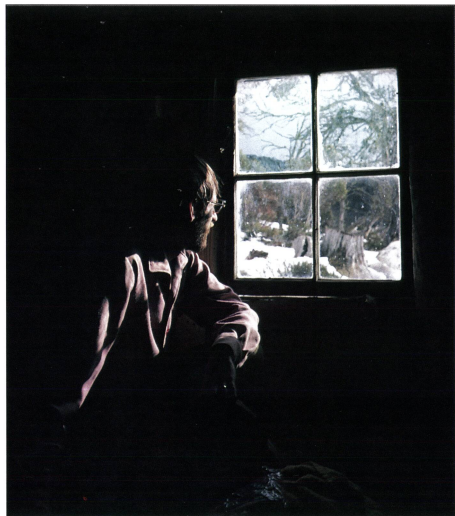
accommodation can have—though the villages and their servicing roads cover comparatively small areas, their visual devastation extends across vast areas of these unique rolling ranges. Even Uluru, one of the most important spiritual sites to Aborigines and Australians in

offer comfort and security to both rangers and travellers, and it is simply good fun to rage inside a heated hut with a large group, even though a small campsite with camp fire offers comparable comfort and security, and a greater opportunity for entertainment.

more affordable in the context of the user-pays philosophy for park management. For those with low incomes, huts and hut fees are an imposition which further discourages access to the few remaining wilderness areas. What seems a nominal charge to some is prohibitive to others. (I am not disputing that walkers should pay a fee for track maintenance, and the disposal of their waste products.)

▲

The issue of wilderness accommodation is a complex one, and the answers are compromises determined



**Above.** Four Mile Hut, Kosciuszko National Park, New South Wales. Brian Evans. **Left.** Mt Balloon from Mackinnon Pass, Milford Track, New Zealand. Parkinson. **Right.** simple accommodation at Blue Lake, Kosciuszko National Park. Wayne Maher

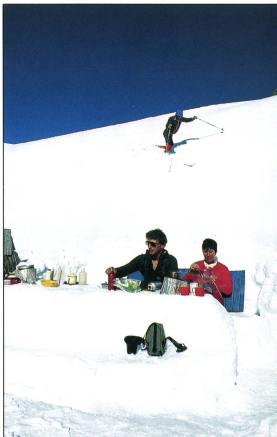
general, has a resort at some 15 kilometres distance. The development of a monorail to encircle our red monolith has also been suggested.

Much wilderness accommodation exists because of economic considerations. National Parks are an international responsibility, and they should be lands upon which corporate exploitation is prohibited, unless there is overwhelming evidence to confirm that it will be non-destructive. Tourism helps unite the world, and the tourist dollar is a positive spin-off for the host country. It is when tourism causes conservation and wilderness values to be sacrificed that it becomes, in part, a disease. Let's face it, bushwalking is a potentially destructive form of tourism.

Why is there a widespread trend towards the erection of track huts? They

Under the stars there is the opportunity for more intimate contact with both your friends and nature. Other justifications for the erection of track huts include that they contain the environmental impact of large numbers of walkers, and that they increase the safety margins for visitors in parks with severe climates. These reasons are sound, but not sufficient for anything but strategic placement of a limited number.

There are alternatives. First, park quotas must not be determined solely by public demand, and rarely by commercial considerations. If public demand is so great that access degrades the wilderness value of a park, then we need more parks, and not more park development. Sensitively placed campsites with discreetly located toilet blocks are a sound means of containing the environmental impact of an acceptable number of walkers. Tents are a proven form of safe accommodation in potentially dangerous climates. Tent-style accommodation may also be



by conflicting ideals and values. It is clear that all parties concerned must be prepared to make sacrifices. Governments must accept that the preservation of wilderness may continue to be a burden on the treasury, and governments and corporate entities alike must be prepared to sacrifice some of those precious tourist dollars. Conservation officers must forgo some of their ideas for park development, no matter how minor the apparent impact. For now, bushwalkers must pay a token for track maintenance and waste disposal, and in the future accept long waiting lists for access to wilderness areas. There may be barely enough parks to cope with today's requirements for recreation. What will be the demand in the 21st century? ▲

Murray Parkinson (see Contributors in Wild no 21) has walked extensively in south-east Queensland, his home State, as well as further afield. His other main interests are painting, photography and philosophy.



***Wild Bushwalking***

A woman with curly brown hair, wearing a red t-shirt and a green backpack, is walking through tall green grass. She is smiling and has her right arm extended forward. The background is a dense forest of tall trees.

**CARNARVON**





## Sharyn McIntyre takes up a personal challenge on this classic Queensland walk

▲ MY PACK WEIGHED AT LEAST 20 kilograms. My companion Darran and I shared between us the bare necessities for three days of walking, with one emergency meal—just in case. I carried all the food plus my sleeping bag and our toilet kit, as well as a change of clothing and heavy jacket for protection from the cold nights and early mornings. Darran had everything else: first aid equipment, ground sheet and tent fly, sleeping bag, torch, cooking and eating utensils and goodness knows what else. All I knew was that my load would diminish and, eventually, my pack would become as light as a feather...wishful thinking. Along with all that, we lugged camera equipment and tripod, which always reminded us of our shoulders' ability to manage bulky and heavy loads.

Friends dropped us off at the Carnarvon Gorge headwaters, 40 kilometres upstream from the camp area and at the 'end of the line' in Mt Moffat National Park north of Injune in central Queensland. Our task was to walk the gorge from its very beginnings, as a suggestion of a creek, to the Carnarvon Gorge Camp Area in Carnarvon National Park. While I had heard a lot about the gorge itself, I'd never really thought of how it was formed, where it originated or what it would be like to follow the meandering route from its beginnings to the populated area of the park.

Darran had walked the gorge on one other occasion, so I felt confident in letting him be the guide and leader of our expedition. When we finally said goodbye to our friends at the headwaters, we were confronted with pure wilderness, without tracks. As we waved to the vehicle disappearing in the distance, we set off, Darran marching in the direction of the gorge and Carnarvon Creek—supposedly. At this stage there was nothing to say that the creek was in any particular direction, but with the setting sun and knowing that the gorge runs from west to east, it wasn't difficult to decipher which way to go.

We were well above the creek, on top of the escarpment. We had to scrub bash across the spiky grass country, not knowing where or on what we were treading. I have a great fear of snakes and this was perfect snake country.

*Left: the author 'looking for snakes' in spiky grass country near the gorge. All photos Sharyn McIntyre collection*

# GORGE



However, I figured that as Darran was ahead, he would frighten them away. I just prayed that they'd travel to the sides rather than shoot off behind him, straight in to my path. For this reason, I was never too far behind, walking noisily. As the sun set behind us, we finally reached the top overlooking the gorge. We chose a gentle saddle to take us down to the creek. This proved a real test for our light footwear as the saddle wasn't quite as



**Above**, our 'alarm clock'. **Near right**, moss-covered walls of the gorge near Island Stack. **Far right**, Aboriginal art in the gorge.

gentle as we thought, and the load on our backs made for some slippery balancing tricks. We had been walking for three hours already, and the light was diminishing, but we finally made it in to the gorge proper and our first sighting of the creek.

Just one obstacle prevented us from choosing a campsite and settling in for the evening. A series of waterfalls, about a 40 metre drop, proved to be too difficult to negotiate. An alternative route was sought and at last we found a nice spot to establish ourselves for the night, under a full moon. The night was alive with the noises of the bush. A solitary boo-book owl called for his mate, a bandicoot rustled nearby (obviously thinking this was his lucky night for a free feed) and birds sang their evening songs. Stars littered the sky and the moon illuminated the heavens. With our dinner over, an early night meant being tucked away in our sleeping cocoons at 7.30 pm. With a big day to follow and the long 300 kilometre drive behind us, one



was in order, but who can sleep at that hour? Well, we managed. We woke to the familiar sounds of our friends the kookaburras, who think they know what time everyone should get up. After all, good bushwalkers should be up and ready to go at the crack of dawn.

Having covered five kilometres the previous day, we intended to walk about 15. Without any track markers or distance gauges, it was a guesstimate how far we travelled. During the initial section of the walk we saw a trickle of a stream, disappearing then reappearing just in time to quench the thirst. Fortunately the weather did not prove too hot, and was even overcast at times. This prevented us from having to apply too many layers of sweat-producing sun-block cream, and from getting overheated and dehydrated. Unfor-

tunately, this type of weather was not conducive to good photographs, but we lugged the gear in the hope of fine, sunny conditions.

After making our way east for some time, taking breaks every hour, the terrain finally changed from hints of the creek and grass that reached my shoulders to rounded rocks and shallow flowing water. The towering sandstone walls of the gorge began to narrow and tighten in. The walls began as grass-lined hills and saddles, but now they were closing in, allowing us to visualize just how they were formed. The stream that we could now identify as Carnarvon Creek was a distinctive flowing water mass, rambling free and carrying with it the etching force of erosion. Our path carried us over the boulders which lined the gorge and



varied in size from small pebbles to those large enough to sit on and rest. Here began the rock-hopping section that would take at least ten kilometres of our first full day in the gorge. It became hard work stepping from rock to rock, choosing rocks that would not give and send us toppling, rucksack and all, in to the creek for an icy dip.

With the bland weather, we rarely stopped to photograph the scenery, but our stops became more regular as the day drew on. Shoulder blades started to ache and my collar bones were feeling the brunt of the heavy load. But still we pressed on, having lunch at the appropriate time and periodically feeding on scroggin for added energy and an excuse for a break. Breaks came every 30 minutes or so and the rock-hopping didn't seem to let up. But what was amazing was following a creek that continually disappeared. Diving like a porpoise, it vanished underground and rose again on the water table.

The creek's nomadic tendencies kept us guessing, especially when it finally came time to find a suitable campsite for the night. Exhausted, we decided that when the creek reappeared, we would stop. However, this was not to happen—well not for at least another four kilometres. Just what we wanted after walking ten hours. Finally, and almost in desperation due to the failing light, we found a small water hole at the base of a massive cliff, now tight over our heads. As part of the creek resurfacing, we felt confident that the water was safe so established camp. Tonight we would sleep well regardless of the time. Only a quoll disturbed the peace by inviting himself to dinner and finishing off the remnants of our rice that had fallen to the

ground during cooking. It was bliss to sleep that second night. Only a scorpion dared to enter the sleep zone, but he was quickly dismissed. Seven-thirty pm or not, I was catching 'zeds' before my head hit the rolled-up jacket that was my pillow.

Unable to determine how far we had come, it was another early departure once the kookaburras had woken us. Back on to the rocks again, and pure concentration was given to those dominating obstacles. The creek returned to a constant flow soon after we started, so we took time out for a quick dip to cleanse our bodies and for a scroggin break. With shoulders and backs feeling tender, breaks were planned at regular intervals until we reached Big Bend—the top of the ten kilometre day-walk from the camp ground. Continual flat weather and familiar scenery along with the rock-hopping became a drudge. Only the occasional spotting of some king or rock orchids broke the monotony. But much to our surprise, only an hour after we'd set out we came across the large monolith rock formation named Island Stack. We dumped our packs and walked in to the deep crevice on one side of the island. We sat down and in disbelief revelled in our achievement. We were only about 12 kilometres from the camping area of Carnarvon Gorge. This meant that the previous day we had rock-hopped for approximately 20 kilometres—no wonder I slept well last night.

So from there, it was plain sailing. Two kilometres on we met up with the marked track beginning at Big Bend Camping Area. Only twenty creek crossings and ten kilometres to go. We made a stop at

Cathedral Cave and the Art Gallery to view some excellent Aboriginal art. The final section of the walk seemed like a piece of cake. No more rocks to hop, just a simple graded track. It all seemed too easy, but a welcome contrast. Those ten



kilometres went like wildfire and soon we were back in camp, unpacking and telling guests to the park of our epic journey and the 87 times we crossed Carnarvon Creek along the way.

I guess I really didn't appreciate the walk until I began recapping the finer details and recalling our experiences of the 40 kilometre trip. Had the weather been better—not overcast and, on one occasion, raining—and had we been able to take lots of photographs, the trip would have been even more appreciated. But I do know that I overcame something that was far more extensive than I had thought. I also know that the inner drive can be found when needed and that in accomplishing such a walk, one can only broaden one's knowledge of the very special country in which we live.

Now that I've done it, I'd like to return when the weather is better and walk Carnarvon Gorge at a slower pace. The scenery is truly spectacular and there are some unforgettable experiences to be recorded. The magic of Carnarvon has captured me. ▲

*Sharyn McIntyre, a relative newcomer to the delights, and trials, of the Australian bush, is a free-lance tour operator and photographer based in Brisbane. She has a fascinating background including work in an advertising agency and as an air hostess involving, of course, extensive travel.*

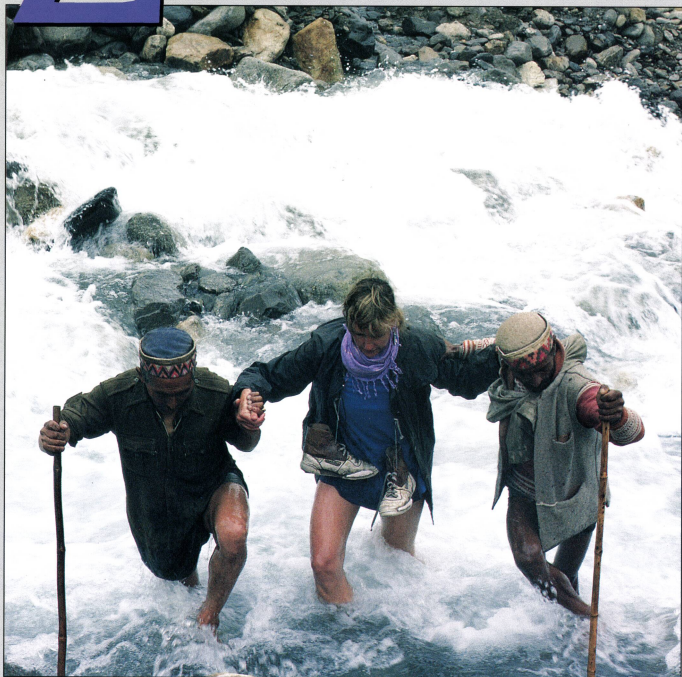
## Carnarvon Gorge





**Wild Trekking**

# ZANSKAR



*'Trekking through time' and a meeting with the Dalai Lama, by Jo Stewart-Barry*





▲ HAVING PREVIOUSLY ENJOYED A VISIT to Rajasthan with its teeming cities, picturesque palaces and exciting bazaars, my husband and I decided to devote a short holiday to exploring a little-known part of the Indian sub-continent, where small communities still live under age-old primitive conditions in a hostile climate.

We first heard of Zaskar through a television documentary, and from that day wanted to explore the region. When we discovered that it was possible to undertake a nine-ten day trek to Padum, the capital of Zaskar, we decided this would be our next trip.

In July 1988 we made our way by trains and buses to Manali, a thriving tourist town set in the mountains of northern India. Our few days in Manali gave us time to start adjusting to the altitude and provided us with food and cooking equipment for our nine-day trek in to the heart of Zaskar. We caught a 6 am bus, hoping to arrive in Darcha eight hours later. The trip took us along an amazingly narrow mountain road with lots of switch-back turns. We had left the beautifully green fertile area around Manali to travel through barren mountains and glaciers. By mid-afternoon the bus stopped, due to a

landslide, and we were on our own. We walked with our packs to a small tea house and waited for another bus to come. By late afternoon we were in Darcha—not bad for Indian travel. Darcha is set in an arid landscape with impressive mountains surrounding the few stone houses, tents and one restaurant. The bridge to the town is removed once the snow sets in, and a flying fox is erected. The remaining villagers suffer a long, isolated winter.

We had met three fellow trekkers on the bus and decided to join forces. We negotiated for three ponies to carry our gear, with the pony man our guide, for a price of 180 rupees (about \$A18) a day. After a few days we were off to Padum. We followed the Barai River, experiencing our first sights of snow bridges, and our first camp was across a gorge, on a flat grassy area. To get there, we had to cross a bridge which was extremely narrow, and consisted of flat rocks between two planks. We soon became used to this potentially dangerous arrangement. On the second day of the trek, we experienced the first of two river crossings. We were prepared for such occasions with old sand-shoes and 40 metres of rope, but none of us was prepared for the rapid-flowing icy

**Above:** Phuctal Monastery blends in to the ancient landscape. **Left:** struggling across the Barai River. All photos Jo Stewart-Barry

waters. We were helped across by our pony man, who was smaller than us but a lot steadier on his feet. We quickly learnt that anywhere the ponies went, we went. For hours we continued uphill and along rocky paths to our next river crossing. This time it was quite a traumatic experience as it was only a very short distance to the main river and if we slipped and got carried away in this fast-flowing tributary, there would be no chance of survival. Once across, we were met by the unexpected sight of the Zaskar Sumdo Tea Shop, a small one-and-a-half metre high stone dwelling with canvas roof. This remote tea house sold noodles, biscuits and quite a surprising range of food. Chang—the local brew—was the top priority of our pony man, while he chatted to the few men around and re-shod the ponies.

The next morning's walk started with another gradual ascent. Soon the snow appeared and we were trekking on a glacier. We came across intermittent rock outcrops, but then it was back in to the snow. I found breathing difficult, and while concentrating on deep breaths my



legs became weary. Still I continued, but with the others way ahead. It was too cold to stop so, very slowly, I kept going. The tall mountains and glaciers looked awesome. Clouds and mist drifted past and the 6,000 metre peaks surrounding

Testa. Each was like an oasis, with green crops and pink wildflowers along the stone walls dividing the properties. Our pony man had a brother at Testa, so we lunched in a field while the male members of the family and some friends

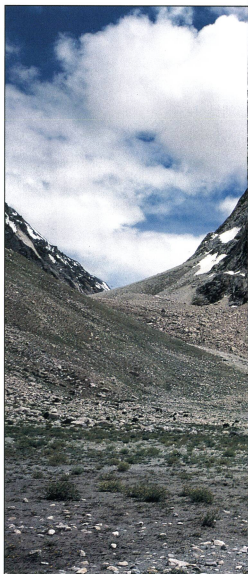
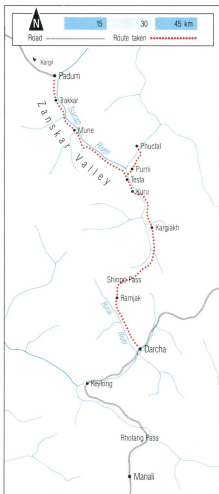


**Above**, watch out, Hilton—the Zanskar Sumdo Tea Shop. **Near right**, precipitous peak viewed from the Zanskar Valley. **Far right**, downtown Padum.

me seemed close and eerie. It was frightening being in such a remote area, feeling the effects of altitude and having nobody around me. After half an hour my husband came back to find me, and I struggled on to the top of Shingo Pass—5,100 metres. There were piles of stones, prayer flags and an amazing feeling of relief and achievement. The descent was fun. I quickly regained my strength as the day's mission was accomplished—and now I was on my way down. Covered in snow, we slid down the mountain, pretending we were skiing. Just below the snow line our friends had set up camp. When I looked at the ponies I felt sorry for them. I couldn't imagine that they had enjoyed icy river crossings, glaciers and being belly-deep in snow.

The next day we walked out of the drizzling weather in to the Zanskar Valley, where temperatures were in the 30s and we had to use our strongest snow block. We were now at about 4,000 metres. The valley was spectacular, with barren earth-coloured mountains on either side. At one end was an imposing rock giant and at the other our first village. We camped across the river. Villagers came to visit and many wore animal skins, furs and an interesting assortment of hats. The morning had provided easy, pleasant walking, passing through the villages of Kuru and

## Zanskar



joined us. It was a fascinating few hours. Passing around a Walkman was a great idea—the villagers' faces lit up with smiles from ear to ear. Some tried to sing along in loud tones, which amused their friends. Finally we had to say goodbye and be on our way. The greenery quickly gave way once more to hills of rubble, and one of our descents was dangerous. The river was a hundred metres straight below; the path was only a metre wide, and with each step we slipped. The ponies looked as if they were going to fall on top of us, but they were more used to the terrain. By nightfall we reached Purni, which consisted of a large family home. Trees and grass provided campsites. There were no supplies.

From here we did a day return walk to Puchal Gompa (monastery) which was to provide unforgettable memories. We followed the Tsarap River, going up and down precarious hills, and crossed a newly rebuilt suspension bridge—this time with hand railings. Finally, before us was the magnificent view of Puchal. This 500-year-old monastery is like honeycomb cut in to a rock under a gigantic grotto. About 70 monks live there. We entered and made our way to





the top by cave-like passages and steps. The view was spectacular, with the river and valley stretching far below, together with the line of white chortens (religious monuments). We entered the head monk's chamber. It was filled with brass, cymbals, drums, tankas (paintings) and photos of the Dalai Lama. A three metre high statue of Avalokiteshwara was at the back of the cave. A large prayer room was at the top of the monastery. It was decorated colourfully and had a platform for the head monk and the Dalai Lama. The monks were expecting the Dalai Lama to visit soon. Whether he would make the trip to such a remote area was questionable, but it was a hive of activity. Old boxes were being opened, tankas brought out, rugs unrolled and a room was being prepared especially. It was decorated entirely in rugs and paintings and looked very comfortable. Children were cleaning years of grime off the floors using knives. Everyone was busy. Tea was available for those who like salt-and-butter tea and can sit in a smoke-filled room. We gave it a miss.

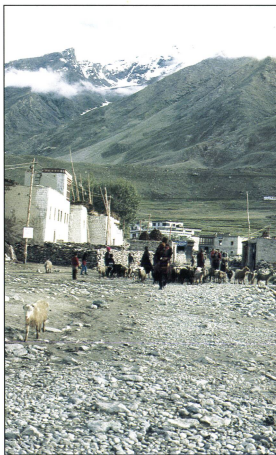
By this stage, we'd met a lot of Tibetans who were also making their way to Padum because the Dalai Lama

was there. We now discovered an atmosphere of sheer excitement. Women wore their wealth in stones. They had head-dresses (peraks) that hung down their backs and were covered in turquoise, coral and silver. Hats seemed to be all shapes and sizes. When I was taking a photo, a young boy picked up my camera bag and put it on his head, and it didn't look particularly out of place. This incident produced lots of smiles on the friendly but weather-worn Tibetan faces. It's impossible to tell the age of these people as they live in such a harsh environment, and have such a hard life. However, a smile says everything when people from two totally different worlds meet.

Our last campsite was special. Spectacular snow-capped mountains surrounded our flat field of grass. A shallow lake was in the centre and this provided beautiful reflections. Our day was full of anticipation. What would Padum be like? Would we see the Dalai Lama? By mid-afternoon we arrived in Padum, which would not be everyone's idea of a capital city. It is a small town, with the usual mud homes with thatch and dung roofs. The roads are unmade

and rocky, and a few general stores and restaurants line the main street.

The main attraction was the Dalai Lama. He was staying in town and was due to start three days of teachings in the morning. A special tent city had been set up in the fields to cater for the thousands of Tibetans who had walked days or weeks to get there. We drank tea in the tent tea-shops and walked amongst these colourful, excited people. It was a



festive feeling. Hats, again, were prominent. I guess the Tibetans we also looked pretty strange in our bright red and blue hooded Gore-Tex jackets. The day before was in the high 30s and the tent city had been a dust bowl, but today it was raining. Despite the weather, the Dalai Lama was delightful, radiating warmth and mystical feeling. We camped in the front yard of the Green Hotel. There was no piped water. Sometimes it flowed from the irrigation system, but I was given a bucket of muddy water with which to wash. A teapot helped pour it over my by now rather dirty body. The fun, however, was chasing the chooks from the 'out-house'. The toilet was two holes in the ground, in a building with a door so small you had to crouch to get through.

Primitive maybe, but I loved our short stay in Padum and the challenge of the trekking was exhilarating and unforgettable. ▲

*Jo Stewart-Barry, an adventure travel 'addict', has visited many parts of the world, including northern India and Kenya, where she met her Canadian husband. They now live in Melbourne and confine their travels to annual holidays.*



## ***Wild Ski Touring***





# A WEEK ON THE MAIN RANGE

Rites of passage on skis, by *Philippa Lohmeyer*

▲ A WEEK ON THE MAIN RANGE. JUST Heather and myself. We'd always skied with others but this time we wanted to wave our own flag for women's independence and prove to ourselves that we could do it.

We arrived at Blue Lake in thick fog. This country is the heart of the Australian Alps, but as yet we had seen little apart from snow, more snow and fog. I began to wonder about the need for independence. We contemplated our accommodation. We had a snow tent but the vacant snow cave was more appealing. A few alterations and it would equal the Hilton—well almost. A group of four skied in from Mt Tate. They looked at our snow cave and commented on its lack of suitability for occupation. Well it did have a low roof and was dug into a slight rise in the snow rather than a big snow drift, but we felt comfortable with our temporary home.

Monday was one of those perfect days. The sky was like a freshly painted Rothko canvas—but blue, pure blue. We skied to Mt Kosciusko by Carruthers Peak and Mt Lee following the main ridge line—the best ridge traverse on skis in Australia. To the north, supreme Jagungal; to the south, Kosciusko with skiers in ant dimensions covering her face; to the east, the Snowy River; to the west, grand Townsend. No trees. Just a winter desert.

Monday night we sank in to our sleeping bags sunburnt, tired, but with our independent spirits fully revived and ready to take on the world. Just as well. The next day was grey, and fog had once more descended. We achieved little apart from a Telemark or two.

Wednesday morning I awoke with the suddenness that generally only occurs when greeted by an alarm clock. I rolled over and looked towards the snow cave entrance. Nothing. I blinked and looked again. Yes, there was Heather fast



*Left, the author contemplates Watsons Crags from Carruthers Peak. Right, Telemarking in a Blue Lake white-out. All photos Philippa Lohmeyer collection*

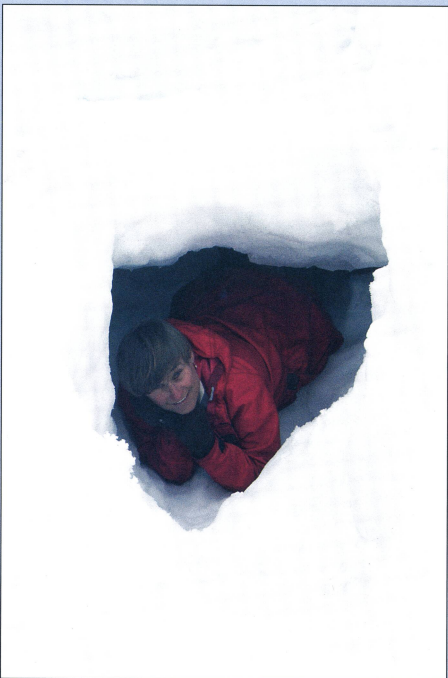


asleep and there was the impression of a door, but no opening. I screamed for Heather to wake up and at the same time dived for the shovel and started to dig. Fortunately our snow cave was more a burrow than a cave with a short tunnel for an entrance, so it didn't take too long to clear the way. Meanwhile, Heather reacted with outstanding presence of mind and began heating water for coffee.

Outside, the snow continued mercilessly. The wind was sending it dancing, so one could barely see three metres ahead. The entrance cleared, I dived straight back in the cave, carefully removed my wet gear and crawled in to my sleeping bag to drink that elixir of life—coffee. As Heather and I sat drinking we looked at each other and glumly grinned, 'What a pickle'. We then glanced back at the entrance and saw, to our horror, that it was again beginning to fill with snow. It almost appeared as if someone was standing on top of the cave shovelling snow in.

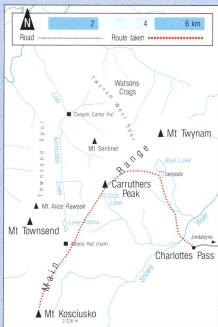
It took 30 minutes to fill. Heather cleared it. We sat and watched it fill again. It took 45 minutes. The 'Theory in Education' lectures I was missing seemed more appealing every minute. I cleared the entrance, shovelling with more aggression than I'd known for a long time. According to my survey of the situation, our snow cave was at the bottom of a five metre funnel. We could try and build a mantle round the entrance, but in all likelihood that would collapse and we'd be in even more of a mess. No wonder this snow cave was found abandoned.

Back in the snow cave I started to read *The Ascent of Rumdoodle*. A classic in climbing literature, this absurdly funny book recounts how Prone, Jungle and team set out to climb Rumdoodle at 40,000½ feet. Somehow the book didn't



Above, the author emerging from the snow cave.

## The Main Range



seem any more absurd than our situation in the middle of that vast white wilderness.

After having cleared the entrance for the sixth time, I crawled back in and sighed. It was 2 pm and this snow could keep falling for days. The wind had lost none of its energy—rather it was now taking the snow through a fast tarantella. I wondered how we could keep up our spirits and energy. Testing one's independence and self-reliance is fine until things get tough. Two hours passed and our entrance remained clear. It was time to venture out and see if the miraculous had happened. At the same time, our neighbors from 50 metres round the lake dropped by to visit. The shared experience of a blizzard brings a rapport that allows easy conversation. It

also facilitates a caring for each other that is often hidden beneath easy-going exteriors. Heather and I appreciated their concern. We were also relieved to hear that they were well.

By 9 pm the sky cleared and the moon rose. We grabbed our skis and glided round Blue Lake as if it were a new day. The Southern Cross had never looked brighter, the moon smiled as we attempted to Telemark over the icy, wind-blown surface. Life surged through our bodies as we raced each other. Laughter echoed around the lake as we slipped and fell. Joy pulled us up again, and in the silence of the night our urge for independence was rested. The memory of that moonlight ski will never fade. ▲

Philippa Lohmeyer teaches chemistry and outdoor pursuits at a private school in Melbourne. An experienced Nordic skier and bushwalker, she has practised these pursuits extensively in south-east Australia and overseas.



# LEARNING TO CLIMB AT MT COOK



**The transition from bushwalker to mountaineer;  
*Laurence Knight outlines his experiences***

▲ MOUNTAINEERING IS A MEMORABLE activity, especially your first time. There are many things a beginner must come to terms with: unfamiliar equipment, crevasses and falling rocks, and spectacular scenery.

I learned the basics of climbing at Mt Cook National Park, New Zealand. I

remember standing outside Tasman Saddle Hut watching the snow fall; listening to John Coulton describe his ascent of Kangchenjunga with Michael Groom; crossing suspect snow bridges; diving aside to avoid being creamed by a rock the size of a basketball; and watching Bill (my climbing partner) forlornly searching through the snow grass after a kea flew off with one of his boots.

*Left, a mischievous kea. Above, a grand vista—the East Face of Mt Cook and Plateau Hut. Laurence Knight*



My most vivid memory involves getting to Plateau Hut, from Haast Hut, to meet Bill. I'd been through a hot and horrible grovel up Haast Ridge, and lacked the confidence to climb over Glacier Dome on my own. Conditions which seem routine to experienced climbers can be quite daunting to the beginner—the snow was soft and steep, there were a number of crevasses to cross, and there were no tracks to follow. The best course was to wait for Brian and Jenny, a competent couple who didn't need crampons or rope. I wasn't too keen about the latter aspect and took care to step in their tracks. Climbing up to the shoulder of Glacier Dome was pretty straightforward, but I knew things were about to get interesting when my companions stopped to strap on crampons.

Plateau Hut was in sight, but getting there meant crossing a narrow snow bridge across a wide slot and then traversing a steep sloping basin (below some ice cliffs), which ran all the way down to the Hochstetter Icefall. Still no sign of a rope. I was distinctly unhappy at this stage and pointed out that we could go round the crevasse. Brian agreed that it would be safer, but didn't see any need—'Don't worry. If you slip, just make sure you fall on the uphill side'. Not very reassuring, but I couldn't afford to freak out. I psyched myself up by deciding it would be like crossing a log, and made it. In the meantime, Brian and Jenny shot down the slope, traversed below the ice cliffs and climbed up the other side. I was much slower, concentrating all my attention on placing my feet and ice axe. This didn't prevent a slip, and I remember lying prone on the slope gripping the axe. I know that people describing this sort of situation often make reference to their life flashing before their eyes. In my view, they were either spaced out or lying; you're too busy staying alive to start day-dreaming.

Fortunately, the axe was firmly planted and I regained my feet. The snow slope up the other side was even steeper and required the use of front-pointing techniques. My 'guides' were nowhere in sight, but their footsteps made good holds for my left hand, and I got up without having to dig out the hammer. I staggered across to the hut and immediately noticed a difference between it and the others I'd visited. There was an atmosphere of confidence and competence that made me feel like a bumbly. It was educational to watch these hardened climbers going about their business. They all jumped out of bed at 1 am, and an hour later were on their way up Mt Cook (which at 3,764 metres is the highest peak in New Zealand). Most reached the summit eight to ten hours later and had a glorious day in the 'Gold Coast' weather. I was content to just see them off, read a book, and watch their return.



**Above.** Tasman Saddle Hut has a precarious perch. **Right.** Knight, the correct equipment is essential. Graeme Hoxley collection

Happier memories include the magnificent views from the summits of Mt Annan, Hochstetter Dom and the Aiguilles Rouge. I also have fond memories of a six-plate gourmet meal on my return to civilization.

Being taught by a friend is certainly an interesting way to learn to climb. An unorthodox education, picking up tricks as you go along, is guaranteed. The catch is that sometimes your mate

forgets you are still a beginner, and you find yourself in uncomfortable situations which you're not really equipped to handle. There are other ways to learn. A school of mountaineering will provide a rigorous, albeit expensive, education. This may not be as much fun as peak bagging with a friend, but you will learn all about knots, avalanches and crevasse-rescue techniques. Also, the guides do their best to stop you coming to grief. An obviously cheaper way to learn is to read a few books. You can teach yourself a lot from a manual (that's



how I learned to self-arrest). However, a manual in the pack is cold comfort if you're on your own and fall down a slot.

If you are interested in learning to climb, Mt Cook National Park is a good place to consider. The area is well serviced by bus and air, and it is possible to walk to Hooker and Mueller Huts and Sefton Bivvy in the summer season without any mountaineering gear. The sunsets and sunrises from these huts can be very beautiful and there are good views of some of the major peaks, such as Mt Cook and Mt Sefton. Further, there are two excellent 'nursery' regions—Tasman Saddle and the Sealy Range. From Kelman, Tasman Saddle and Barron Saddle Huts there are a number of grade-one and -two climbs (the scale runs from one to six). Starting off in these areas gives the beginner a chance to learn techniques without being intimidated by the conditions.

When you've got the hang of the basics, you can then progress to the more challenging peaks accessible from de la Beche, Beetham and Plateau Huts. These include Malte Brun and the Aiguilles Rouges, Mt de la Beche and the Minarets, and Mt Dixon. The really serious climbs, on Mt Cook, Mt Tasman, and La Perouse, range from grade four to grade six. They are accessed from Plateau, Gardiner and Empress Huts

and are best left to seasoned climbers. All huts are run by the Mt Cook National Park. With the exception of Sefton Bivvy, the cost to stay is \$NZ12 a night. These huts are equipped with kerosene stoves and lanterns, kitchen utensils, mattresses, first aid kits and two-way radios. Each night in the summer season, the ranger station at Mt Cook village runs a 7 pm radio schedule or 'sked'. The duty ranger broadcasts a weather forecast consisting of barometric conditions, wind direction and speed at 1,800 metres and 3,000 metres, expected precipitation at Tasman Saddle, and the free-air freezing level, an important guide to snow conditions. All huts are then called up to check party locations and to pass on messages.

The most important feature of the huts is, of course, shelter. There are often prolonged periods of bad weather in the park, and watching a blizzard from inside a hut is much more comfortable than being stuck in a tent. Still, there is an element of danger, as huts have been literally blown away. But then mountaineering is a dangerous sport, more so than bushwalking or rockclimbing. On some peaks of the Himalayas, such as K2, there are as many deaths as there are successful ascents. You also need to be well

equipped with cold/wet weather gear, basic rockclimbing gear (rope, harness, Friends, slings), a helmet, ice axe, hammer, crampons, prusik loops, snow stakes, ice screws and a headlamp. However, I feel mountaineering is the more enjoyable. The experiences of climbing hard snow early in the morning and taking in the summit views are hard to beat.

## Mt Cook

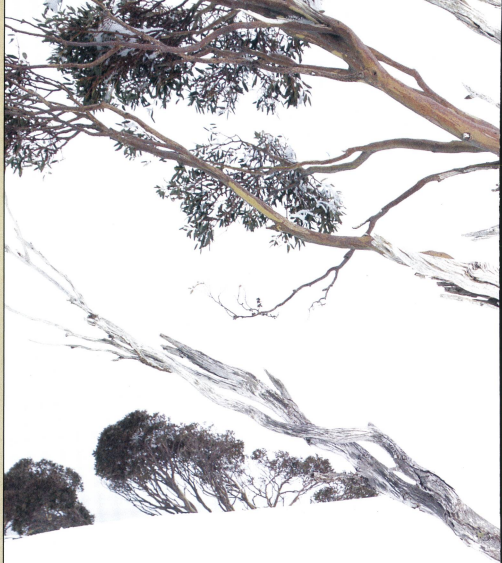


To ensure that you are in a position to pass on such happy memories, there are three basic rules you must obey: 1 Never believe anyone who says you won't need prusik loops. You could be terribly embarrassed if one of you steps in a slot. 2 Steer clear of 'gun barrels' (rock chutes). The physics involved in a collision between a rock and a climber is very messy. 3 Hang on to your ice axe. You wouldn't be reading this if I'd lost mine.

There is a great deal of literature on mountaineering and Mt Cook. Three publications that are particularly useful are Lindsay Main's *Mountaineering Mountain Safety Manual 20*, New Zealand Mountain Safety Council, 1987; Hugh Logan's *The Mount Cook Guidebook*, New Zealand Alpine Club, 1987; and the Department of Lands & Survey NZMS 180 *Mount Cook & Westland National Parks* 1:100,000 map. ▲

Laurence Knight is a post-graduate university student who has walked extensively in Queensland, the Australian Alps and Tasmania.





*Michael Fogarty*

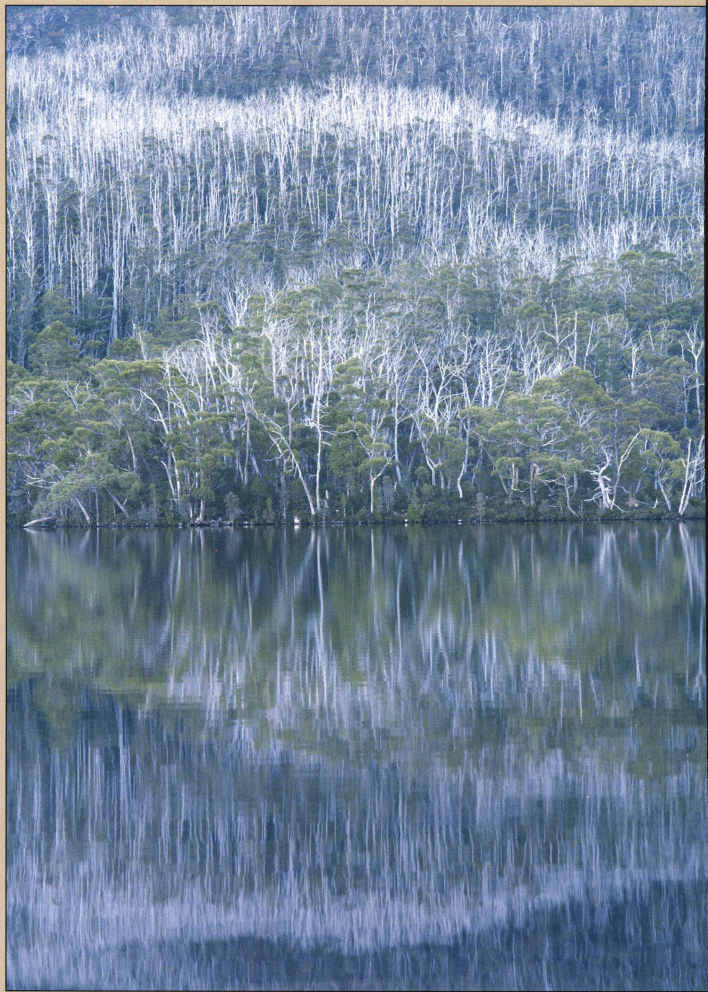






**Main picture**, snow gum, Mt Jim, Bogong High Plains, Victoria. **Far left**, Little Hugel, Tasmania.

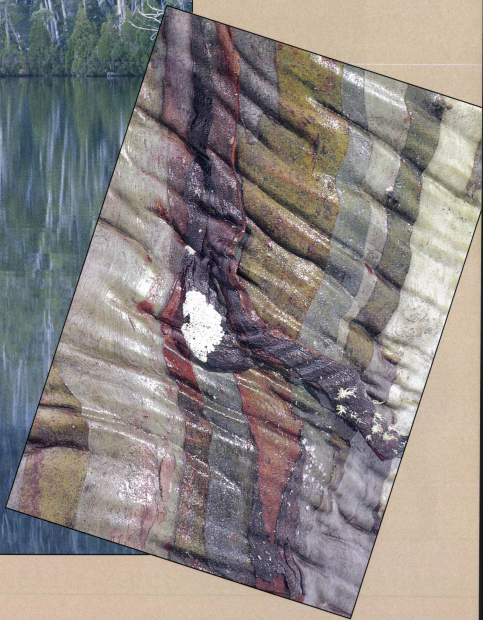








**Left.** Forgotten Lake, Tasmania. **Below.** snow gum, Bogong High Plains, Victoria.





*Escape into the  
Wilderness*

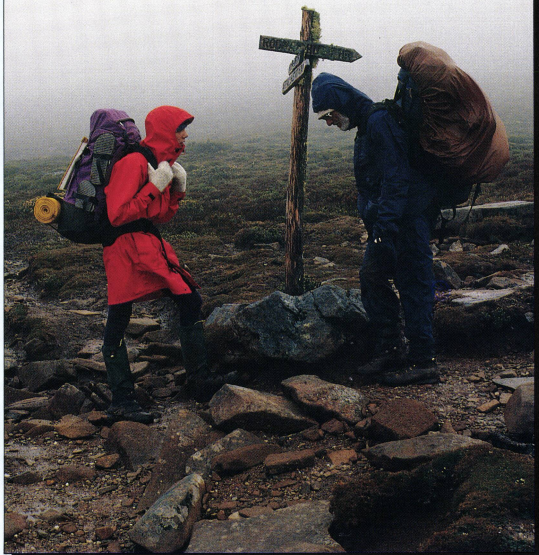
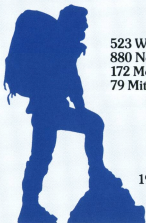


PHOTO - STEPHEN HAMILTON

# SCOUT OUTDOOR CENTRES



**MITCHAM**  
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# From Cape to Cappuccino

The Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park in Western Australia, with *John Webb*

▲ WHAT A DIFFICULT CHOICE TO BE presented with at the end of a hard day's walk—cappuccino and cake or Margaret River brie and a milder beverage? As I raised my eyes from the menu, the first sailboarders had just finished rigging up and took off in slices of spray over a bay so blue it would challenge any Greek island you could name. They sailed out towards a setting sun as a cooling breeze came off the Indian Ocean just round the headland. Sounds like the way you'd like to end a hard day's walk? Well, the Café Gnarabup at Prevelly is just one of the unexpected delights you'll come across if you choose to walk the length of the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park in the south-west of Western Australia.

**The park.** It is long and narrow and lies between two capes, Leeuwin and Naturaliste, each of which acts as a memorial to waves of exploration and interest by the Dutch and French respectively. There are 28 separate reserves, gazetted piecemeal since 1902, which total 15,500 hectares. The fragmentary nature of the park, which at its narrowest is less than 100 metres wide between high-water mark and adjoining private land, means that for its 100 kilometre length it has 242 kilometres of landward boundary. The park is enormously popular. In 1987 more than 300,000 people visited the area for activities ranging from bird-watching and wildflower photography to surfing and fishing.

**Maps.** A number of maps can be consulted but not all tracks are marked. The Forests Department 1:50,000 sheets *Busselton*, *Margaret*, *Boranup* and *Augusta* are useful. Less bulky are the two Natmap 1:100,000 sheets, 1929 *Leeuwin* and 1930 *Busselton*.

**Access.** The park is three hours by road and south of Perth. Once at the park, some 40 roads or tracks give access to the coast across the ridge from Caves Road, the main road on the park's eastern boundary.

It is well worth noting that as the traverse of the park is a non-circuit, necessitating two cars, public transport can be taken to start and finish the walk. A combination of the *Australind*, a very fast and comfortable train service to Bunbury, and Westrail buses can be used to get to and from the northern start points, Dunsborough or Yallingup, or the southern start point, Augusta.

**The track.** There is no track, and as I have an aversion to the 'turn left at the third gum tree' account of a track, I've given a number of general pointers about routes and safety. Add common sense, and the combination will lead to an enjoyable walk.



**Right, strike a light, it's Cape Leeuwin** (from near Skippy Rock). All photos John Webb collection



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The most obvious route is the beach itself. However, as a general rule the narrower the beach, the fluffier the sand and, therefore, the more fatiguing to travel across. At various places you will encounter wave-cut platforms, such as south of Cape Hamelin. Generally, walking on these is easier than the beach and is obligatory when there is a high tide and swell running, since the 'king wave' must not be forgotten. At other places you will come to cliffs as this walk passes, for example, Wilyabrup, the premier sea-cliff climbing area in the State. If it is low tide and calm and there is a wave-cut platform, as at Wilyabrup, then take the low route. If in doubt, take to the cliff top. If you like bouldering, take your Fires with you as Cape Hamelin offers some excellent climbing.

In addition there are many four-wheel-drive tracks. While some of these are marked on maps, others even signposted, there are many others which, if joined, make an easy walk, even if a dusty one. They run along the ridge to various fishing spots.

The simple pleasure of route finding is augmented by those moments of pure joy when, on turning a corner or breasting a ridge, you see the next cliff-circled bay or the beautiful curve of a white sandy beach.

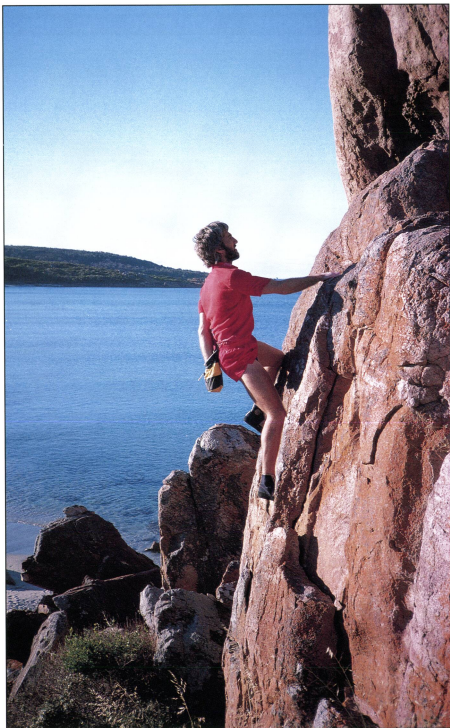
**Adjacent areas of interest.** There are three (of the many) activities available in the area which I would like to point out. I will leave the discovery of the wines to the dedicated drinker.

**Caves** are a feature and are unusual in that they are so young, geologically speaking. The limestone in which they are shaped has been forming for a mere 10,000 years, rather than the 10 million years of cave regions elsewhere. The Jewel, Lake, Mammoth and Yallingup caves, all accessible from Caves Road, are open to visitors in controlled groups. For the serious speleologist, however, descent can be made in to three other caves—Brides, Giants and Calgardup can be explored on application to the Cowaramup Ranger, the Busselton District Office or the Department of Conservation and Land Management.

The second is the **Boranup Forest**. This stand of karri, six kilometres inland from the coast between Cape Freycinet and Hamelin Bay, is well worth a visit, despite the steady climb up and over the ridge along either Brozie or Hooley Road. Such trees formed the basis of the karri export industry which flourished briefly in the 1880s.

The **Scenic Look-out** off Boranup Drive, and **Boranup Hill** itself, as the highest points in the area giving all-round views, are well worth the climb. The views east over the tall canopy of forest and south over the Blackwood River plains are one of the few chances to appreciate the varied landscapes which exist in close proximity, from stunted coastal heath to the colossal karri stands.

The area is also being opened up by 'Heritage Trails', and two are ready, with others in preparation. The Margaret River 'Trail' is a combination of three walks totalling 6.5 kilometres near the town site. The Augusta-Busselton 'Trail' is much more substantial, as it is some 100 kilometres long. It follows the approximate route of that region's first explorers, the Molloyes and Turners, and their opening up of the area to



*Above, the author at play on Castle Rock, near Cape Naturaliste.*

settlement in the 1830s. This 'trail' could allow a walk back to Busselton from Augusta. For more information on these 'trails' write to the Heritage Trails Secretariat, 184 St George's Terrace, Perth, WA 6000.

**Gear.** I suggest that this walk be done in summer, from November to February and, therefore, gear should be kept light—shorts and sand-shoes rather than long trousers and boots. A tent is optional and a sleeping bag cover should suffice.

Fires cannot be lit, except in the various fireplaces about the park. On days of extreme fire danger, they may be banned altogether, so be alert for such signs.

Water *must* be carried, as natural water points are scarce. The water point on the Cape Clairault Road, for example, does not give potable water, and water purification tablets should be taken for the Turner Creek water point marked on the Augusta 1 : 50,000 sheet, as this may be present, but not flowing. However, there is excellent water at the point laconically named 'the Fishing Place' on the Boranup 1 : 50,000 sheet, otherwise known as





# MERRELL

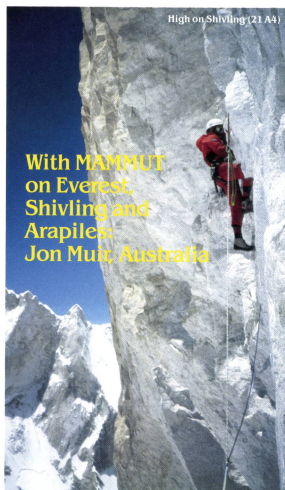
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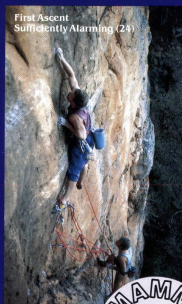
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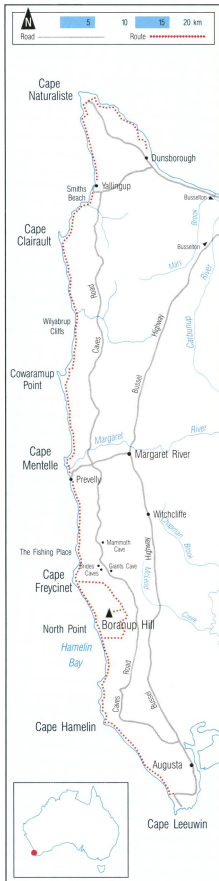


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# MAMMUT



## Leeuwin-Naturaliste



Bobs Hollow, which is a beautiful rich oasis of bird and insect life.

Bushwalkers are not charged for camping in the park. It is suggested that you inform the appropriate Ranger station before beginning the walk (Yallingup, if you begin from the north or Augusta if you begin from the south) and then again when you depart the park safely.

wet sack in the shade a few metres away, or already in the freezer of his meticulous long-wheel-base four-wheel-drive up in the dunes. You must wait for him to speak. If he has not spoken within 22 minutes, walk on. If he speaks before then, amicable conversation will occur in direct proportion to how good the fishing has been in the last 24 hours.



**Above.** "...sitting with legs crossed and staring out to sea, eyes glazed in prayer for the perfect wave."

To conserve and deploy resources more gainfully within the park, the department does not supply rubbish removal facilities at any of the road ends. You must, therefore, be prepared to carry out all rubbish, so plan accordingly.

**People.** One cannot finish this description of the park without some mention of the two types of people one is most likely to encounter.

The first is the surfer. These are the gentle, 'spaced-out' types seen eating hamburgers at the take-away joints at Yallingup and Cowaramup. One stumbles across them early in the morning, wearing their 'Crystal Cylinders', 'Hot Buttered' or 'Torquay' T-shirts, suitably ragged, sitting with legs crossed and staring out to sea, eyes glazed in prayer for the perfect wave. These surfers are not to be disturbed so pass by gently. If a moving surfer—one with an army surplus pack on his back and boards under each arm—is encountered, a brief glance seawards and a confident 'Great tubes, hey?' will warrant a greeting in return.

The other is the fisherman. This will more than likely be a middle-aged male, on an isolated rocky outcrop overlooking the sea. Sporting a dour expression, he reels his line in on a rod which points skywards in some strange form of propitiation. Walk up to him and look in his bucket nonchalantly, but do not say: 'Geez, caught those have you?'. This is his bait bucket, and the comment will mark you as a moron. The real catch will either be in a

I have spent half an hour playing with the desperately bored young children of an angler who steadfastly ignored all three of us from six metres away.

I almost forgot the woman I saw at 6 am on Smiths Beach. She rode a black stallion up and down the sand several times and then discarded her T-shirt (*Wishful thinking?* Editor) and plunged topless in to the surf—such encounters are the stuff of which memories, dreams and improbable recollections are made. Maybe you'll meet someone equally as stunning.

Which leaves me with my original choice at the Café Gnarabup. I decided that Zen was needed and that no answer is also an answer.

'I'll have the brie and the Twinnings first followed by the cappuccino and the Black Forest cake, thanks'. The waitress smilingly wrote it down. I settled back to watch the sailboards slicing and hovering in the heat haze towards the horizon.

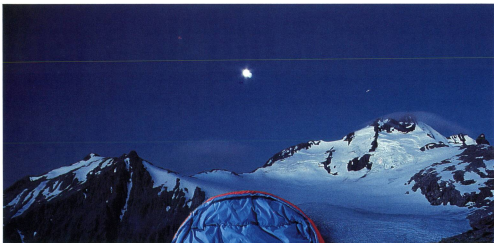
I've deserved this, I thought.

**Bibliography and further information.** *Landscape*, CALM (Department of Conservation and Land Management), April 1988, pages 34-42. *Forests on Foot*, K Meney and P Brown, Campaign to Save Native Forests, Wescolour, 1985, especially walks 34 and 36. *Wild Places, Quiet Places*, CALM, 1988. CALM offices, Perth and Busselton. ▲

John Webb is a writer and teacher who juggles pedagogy with the pull of the mountains and the drive to be published. He teaches in order to get money to go climbing to achieve insights in the calm of the mountains so that he has something to write about. When doing none of the above he can be found living in Perth.



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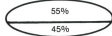
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If there's nothing you can see to get rid of, don't worry. Truth is, we just can't bear the thought of you being anything less than comfortable and cosy.

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to be fussy manufacturers. Knowing us, we'll probably be even fussier next year.

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# Canoes and Kayaks

Paddle your own, with Yvonne McLaughlin

▲ THIS IS THE FOURTH AND BIGGEST SURVEY of canoes and kayaks in *Wild*. Others appeared in issues 7, 22 and 23 and focused on fiberglass, plastic and inflatable boats. This survey brings you up to date on all three categories.

The major change in recent times has been the shift away from fiberglass boats towards boats made from polyethylene (plastic). Rapids (and waterfalls!) that were regarded as out of bounds are now routinely paddled, largely due to the more daring attitudes brought about by 'indestructible' plastic kayakers.

Five years ago it was expected that polyethylene would just about displace

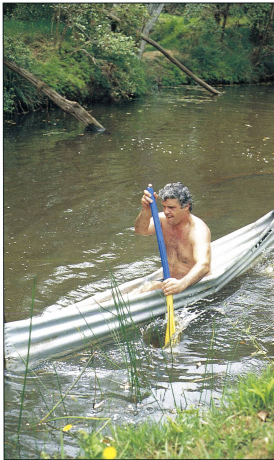
fiberglass as a boat building material. However, this has not occurred to the extent predicted. Fiberglass still has its uses, its areas of supremacy and its devotees. Plastic boats are popular for recreational white-water use as they tend to bend, rather than break, when rocks are encountered. In similar circumstances, fiberglass boats may crack, splinter and eventually break up.

A variety of proprietary plastics is used for boat construction and can be classified as linear plastic or cross-linked plastic. Cross-linked plastic is not easily repairable because the cross-linked structure will not liquify at high temperatures—it usually only carbonizes (goes black). Boats constructed of

## Wild Gear Survey Canoes and Kayaks

Material	Length/beam, centimetres	Weight, kilograms	Price range	Comments
<b>Canoes: flat-water touring</b>				
<b>B-Line Australia</b>				
Emu	FG 530/90	40	\$1,000-1,100	Large open canoe, plenty of room
<b>Coleman USA</b>				
Coleman	LP 450/90	34	\$750-800	Traditional design, aluminium fittings
<b>Current Craft New Zealand</b>				
Explorer	LP 500/84	36	\$950-1,000	Traditional design, several functional layouts
<b>Geoff Barker Australia</b>				
Marathoner	FG 503/75	22	\$700-750	Primarily designed for the Murray Marathon
Pioneer	FG 490/86	40	\$700-900	Traditional design, open canoe
<b>Ibis Australia</b>				
Brave	FG 410/84	29	\$775-850	Traditional design, timber fittings
Feather	FG 270/76	15	\$625-700	Short canoe, suitable for lakes and quiet rivers
<b>Rosco Australia</b>				
Rosco 20	FG 610/86	35	\$1,000-1,100	Aluminium fittings, many different models
<b>Canoes: inflatable</b>				
<b>Melzieler Germany</b>				
Canyon	SR 423/101	20	\$2,800-2,900	Good white-water tourer, grade 1-2
Indo	SR 444/104	27	\$2,900-3,000	Very well equipped, versatile, grade 2-3
XIII Trekking	SR 424/95	20	\$2,900-3,000	Good white-water tourer, grade 2-3
<b>Canoes: white-water touring</b>				
<b>Ape UK</b>				
Adventurer	LP 440/80	32	\$800-900	Semi-enclosed design, useful for trips on grade 1-2
<b>Aymest Australia</b>				
Australia	LP 488/100	37	\$750-850	Traditional design, several different models, versatile
<b>B-Line Australia</b>				
Kangaroo	FG 450/85	38	\$800-950	Semi-enclosed design, useful for long trips on grade 2-3
Wobblingong	LP 450/84	36	\$750-850	Popular white-water tourer
Wombat	FG 400/80	30	\$700-900	Open design, good for long trips, grade 1-2
<b>Canoe Factory Australia</b>				
Penetrator	FG 460/80	32	\$700-900	Fully decked, easy to roll, versatile, grade 1-4
<b>Comp Craft Australia</b>				
Rapid Rider	FG 430/85	28	\$700-900	Semi-enclosed design, useful for long trips on grade 2-3
<b>Ibis Australia</b>				
Canyon	FG 400/84	29	\$650-750	Semi-enclosed design, useful for long trips, on grade 1-2
Cleanwater	FG 470/93	34	\$800-900	As above

## Wild Gear Survey



**Above:** 'before'—it's all plain sailing in the next best (worst?) thing to the proverbial barbed-wire canoe. Photos Yvette Yeates

linear plastic are more easily repaired, usually by careful application of heat. Fiberglass boats are comparatively easy to repair, although it can be a messy process. Ease of repair is always a consideration when choosing a boat; however if the likelihood of damage is small, then it is obviously not a major issue.

Inflatable craft, whether rafts, canoes or kayaks, are becoming a familiar sight on rivers and lakes. Because they are easily paddled and so forgiving on rivers, they are popular with beginners. Only canoes and kayaks have been included in this survey. However, the manufacturers mentioned also have rafts in their range of products and will supply information on request.

For many years the design of kayaks and canoes was dominated by the competition rules of the International Canoe Federation (ICF). These rules specify minimum lengths, widths and other requirements. In recent years, boat designers have realized that the recreational paddling market is far larger than



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## Wild Gear Survey Canoes and Kayaks continued

	Material	Length/beam, centimetres	Weight, kilograms	Price range	Comments
<b>Canoes: white-water touring (continued)</b>					
<b>Geoff Barker Australia</b>					
Horizon	FG	503/79	34	\$750-800	Semi-enclosed design
<b>Perception USA/Current Craft New Zealand</b>					
Gyia Max	LP	380/69	17	\$900-1,000	One of few plastic C1s, light on spool, day trips only
<b>Rosco Australia</b>					
Rosco 16	FG	500/85	34	\$700-800	Aluminium fittings, many different models
Canadian Special	FG	490/86	35	POA	Semi-enclosed design
<b>Kayaks: flat-water touring</b>					
<b>Canoe Factory Australia</b>					
Normal	FG	420/65	13	\$475-550	Useful flat-water boat, handles small rapids smoothly
<b>Geoff Barker Australia</b>					
Nymph	FG	414/61	15	\$550-600	Popular design
<b>Quality Kayaks New Zealand</b>					
Venturer	XP	416/60	18	\$650-750	Primarily designed for open water (inshore-estuaries)
<b>Rosco Australia</b>					
Rosco TK1	FG	416/58	16	\$475-550	Useful flat-water boat, handles small rapids smoothly
<b>Kayaks: inflatable</b>					
<b>Metzeler Germany</b>					
Tramper	SR	520/85	13	\$1,550-1,650	Useful for short trips, grade 1-2
<b>Sevylor France</b>					
TX390	SR	390/90	17	\$700-800	Useful for short trips, grade 1-2
<b>Kayaks: white-water touring</b>					
<b>Ace UK</b>					
Cadence	LP	359/60	16	\$650-750	Easily manoeuvrable white-water boat
Europa	LP	395/60	17	\$600-700	Excellent tourist, several models available
Juniper	LP	295/59	14	\$600-700	Primarily a day tripper, very manoeuvrable
Mirage	LP	395/59	16	\$600-700	Clean lined plastic boat, useful storage capacity
Valetta	LP	359/60	16	\$650-750	High- and low-volume versions available
<b>Aymest Australia</b>					
Wildcat	LP	360/60	17	\$575-650	Medium-volume boat
<b>B-Line Australia</b>					
Olymp TS	FG	380/60	18	\$625-700	High-volume white-water tourist
<b>Canoe Factory Australia</b>					
Augberg	FG	400/60	13	\$425-475	An old design but still very popular
SE7	FG	420/60	16	\$425-475	Clean-lined white-water tourist, good storage capacity
<b>Current Craft New Zealand/Perception USA</b>					
Dancer	LP	320/60	16	\$500-650	Popular white-water play boat, light on spool for long trips
Dura	LP	400/60	18	\$600-700	Medium-volume boat, excellent fittings
Eclipse	LP	370/61	16	\$800-850	High-volume boat, useful storage capacity
Sabre	LP	370/60	15	\$800-850	Medium-volume boat, good for white-water play
<b>Hylex Australia</b>					
Rabel	LP	384/63	20	\$650-750	High-volume boat, useful storage capacity
<b>Quality Kayaks New Zealand</b>					
Alpha	LP	360/60	15	\$650-750	Primarily a day tripper, very manoeuvrable
<b>Roadswe Australia</b>					
Canyon 370	LP	370/60	18	\$600-650	Medium-volume boat, excellent white-water tourist
<b>Sea Kayaks</b>					
<b>Canoe Specialists Australia</b>					
Greenlander II	FG	574/59	21	\$750-850	Widely used for offshore paddling (eg Barrier Reef)
<b>Journey Beyond Australia</b>					
Pittsark	FG	500/58	21	\$1,300-1,400	Fully equipped expedition kayak
<b>Nimbus Canada</b>					
Chinook	LP	500/59	29	\$1,300-1,500	Popular expedition kayak, very well equipped
Puffin	LP	480/73	23	\$1,300-1,400	As above
Sea Famer	FG	480/58	24	POA	Well designed, short-length sea kayak

FG Fibreglass, LP Linear Plastic, POA Price on Application, SR Synthetic Rubber, XP Cross-linked Plastic

the competitive market. So now the focus is on a range of recreational designs, instead of simply last year's slalom boats.

Boats in the survey have been categorized as white-water touring, flat-water touring and sea touring. Whereas previously the



**Above:** 'after'—it looks like corrugated iron isn't the answer to those plastic upstarts after all.

boundaries between each category were blurred, specialization has now become the norm rather than the exception. Boats need to be chosen with specific uses in mind.

The majority of boats surveyed are made from linear plastic or fibreglass. Some boats, such as specialist competition boats, are beyond the scope of this survey. Information has been supplied by retailers, but exact prices have not been given as most boats are available in a range of options and models, while prices do differ slightly between retailers. Approximate prices and weights are generally for standard-construction boats—queries should be addressed to the retailer or manufacturer concerned.

Newcomers to the sport often find the array rather daunting. The above table is a good start to becoming familiar with the different types available. However, it is also worth while to make use of other people's experience before making your choice—talk to people you meet on the water and ask boat retailers for advice. Many retailers hire out canoes and kayaks or have demonstration models which potential customers may borrow. This is a good way to get the feel of a boat before purchase. Retailers will be happy to supply further information if required. ▲

Yvonne McLaughlin (see Contributors in Wild no 7) is Wild's Contributing Editor for canoeing. She has been paddling for more than ten years and is an instructor with the Victorian Board of Canoe Education.



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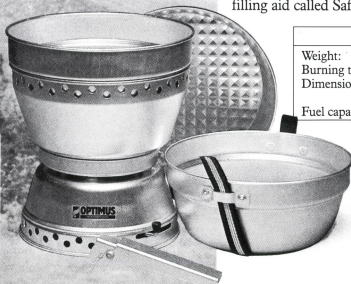
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# Freeze-dried Food

**Equipment**

Take-away dinners—a *Wild* survey

**Read and Inwardly Digest.** 'What do you, the reader, want to know about freeze-dried food?' Such was the question I found myself confronted with when compiling this mini-survey. I reasoned that since most people used freeze-dried food because of its light weight, ease of preparation, long life, and uncanny resemblance to *real* food, detailing nutritional content would be hardly relevant. The freeze-drying process itself, whereby ice is drawn from frozen food in a vacuum, alters the food value only marginally. It is the associated processing and assorted additives that handicap freeze-dried in any comparison with its fresh equivalent. Suffice to say that by reading the list of ingredients on the back of the packet and applying a little common sense, it's possible to get a pretty good idea of the nutritional integrity of the meal in



**Above,** serving up the de-hy. **Right,** perhaps it's not surprising there are so many vegetarians out there—Nepalese butcher, Stephen Bunton

question. Most of us are simply looking for hot and tasty nourishment at the end of a long hard day.

Here are some hints for those of you who've followed the instructions on the packet to the letter and then wondered why your curried beef morsels ended up with a texture akin to polystyrene. All freeze-dried meals should be cooked in a pot whenever possible; ignore any manufacturer's advice to the contrary. Even more important (especially with meat dishes) is to pre-soak your food for as long as practicable before cooking. At least 30 minutes' soaking will not only make your food more palatable but cut down on cooking time.

Experience has shown me that the blandest of meals can be transformed in to a culinary sensation with the addition of a liberal amount of my favourite curry. A selection of several herbs and spices can do wonders for your freeze-dried meals.

The number of freeze-dried varieties to select from has expanded in recent years. Old favourites like the almost legendary Chilli Con Carne are still available, but now you can choose from more imaginative concoctions such as Smoked Fish in Parsley Sauce and Spinach Pasta Stroganoff. With such a bewildering array of dishes, you may ask: 'How am I supposed to choose between them? Do I need to try them all to find the







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Annapurna Down Bag. Courtesy Mountain Equipment. Photo by Ian Martin.



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## Wild Equipment Survey Freeze-dried Food

	Energy per serve, calories	Carbo- hydrate per serve, grams	Protein per serve, grams	Fat per serve, grams	Total weight, grams	Serves	Price	Comments
<b>Alliance New Zealand</b>								
Beef and Beans	346	9.7	na	12.5	75	1	\$7.32	Good gravy
Beef Casserole	367	7.8	na	7.6	75	1	\$5.99	A hearty beef stew
Beef Curry and Rice	362	18.4	na	4.7	75	1	\$5.32	Unspectacular but okay
Chili Con Carne	485	10.6	na	10.7	75	1	\$5.32	I like it; always have, always will
Lamb and Peas	337	9.4	na	17.0	75	1	\$5.99	Just like a country pub meal
Macaroni and Cheese	412	22.7	na	18.2	75	1	\$4.21	Simple but tasty
Premium Beef Mince	339	5.4	na	na	75	1	\$5.32	Sally, might make a good base
Prime Beef Steak	na	na	na	na	40	1	\$5.99	Will appeal to meat eaters
Savoury Mince and Rice	376	4.4	na	11.2	75	1	\$4.21	Plain but okay
Smoked Fish in Parsley Sauce	348	10.5	na	0.9	60	1	\$5.99	Sensational
Vegetarian Plat	382	22.1	na	21.4	75	1	\$4.21	Pleasant but needs extra flavour
<b>Backpacker's Pantry USA</b>								
Cashew Mushroom Curry and Rice	220	40.0	10	6.0	213	2	\$12.30	Very tasty; strange texture
Chili and Beans	390	48.0	28	18.0	198	2	\$10.35	Delicious mild chili
Louisiana Red Beans and Rice	425	53.0	32	18.0	181	2	\$9.20	Good, but a little bland
Spaghetti and Sauce	266	36.0	12	13.0	202	2	\$9.35	A hearty, flavoursome meal
Sprach Pasta Strangoff	256	39.0	13	14.0	170	2	\$8.75	Good, but a little salty; confusing instructions
Whole Wheat Fettucini	278	45.0	15	18.0	202	2	\$9.60	Simple, tasty, filling
<b>Giant Trees Australia</b>								
Beef Goulash	na	na	na	na	100	1	\$5.50	Not a favourite
Beef Stew	na	na	na	na	100	1	\$5.50	Okay; needs spicing up
Chicken Hawaiian	na	na	na	na	100	1	\$5.50	Not popular with tasters; strong aftertaste
Lamb and Vegetables	348	63.1	21	5.9	100	1	\$5.50	Okay; needs spicing up
San Larkian Corned Vegetables	na	na	na	na	100	1	\$5.50	Bland but quite nice; good with a hot curry
Traditional Vegetarian	na	na	na	na	100	1	\$5.50	An unusual flavour

na not available

tastier ones? Well, you don't, because I've done it for you.

In an attempt to quantify that all-important intangible, taste, I made an effort to sample and rate most of the available varieties of freeze-dried food. (Note that Giant Trees meals contain freeze-dried and dehydrated ingredients.) With the help of a few friends, I consumed 23 freeze-dried meals over a one-week period (and lived to tell about it!). Manufacturers' directions were not necessarily followed during preparation, although all meals were eaten straight. The opinions expressed are purely subjective and are not necessarily representative of public tastes. Ultimately you will only really know whether a meal is to your liking after you have tried it.

I found some real treats, although I was disappointed with the overall standard. There is a need for quality vegetable dishes to balance the current emphasis on meat and simple pasta and rice dishes. *Bon appétit.*

Stewart Spooner

**Wild Horses.** *Travel packs* are a species of rucksacks with sufficient advantages for airborne excursionists and enough shortcomings for the serious outdoor user to limit their following to those who see themselves in the former category. The principal identifying features of a travel pack are a more or less simplified rucksack harness that can be zipped out of sight and harm's way behind a panel of fabric, and a long zip that allows access to the contents in the manner of a suitcase. Many brands are available.

The *Berghaus Mustang* travel pack range boasts a number of new models. The 'exec



Above. Mustang travel pack.

model' *Mustang 25* is a 25 litre briefcase which can be transformed in to a day pack at the pull of a zip and the clipping of a couple of straps. The two parts of the *Mustang 40*, one a briefcase and the other a day pack, zip together to make an overnight-sized bag which can be carried either in the hand or on the back. The *Mustang 65* and *70* are large travel packs, the latter having an attached day pack where the former has a fixed pocket, both with a harness of fixed length coated in Advent fabric.

All models are made of hard-wearing Ardu, a Cordura equivalent, and all have internal dividers for pens, passports and

wallets. They range in weight from 1.8 to 2.5 kilograms and cost from RRP \$89.50 to \$298.

**The Birth of the One-eyed Snake?** The *Berghaus Cyclops II* range of rucksacks with fixed-length harnesses, was reviewed in *Equipment*. *Wild* no 29. A new addition is the *Cobra*, a 50 litre sack in two compartments, with zip access to the bottom section and a divider that can be opened or closed by means of a draw-cord. The *Cobra* has attachment points for skis and ice tools and, like most *Cyclops II* rucksacks, is made of Ardu and has a harness faced with Advent. It weighs two kilograms and costs RRP \$319.

**Extra Dry.** The survey in *Wild* no 28 of pack liners and dry bags makes mention of *D B Stuff Canyon Bags* and *Ortlieb Dry Bags*, both made of nylon-reinforced PVC in a variety of sizes.

Ortlieb now make Dry Bags in three PVC-coated fabrics—lightweight Oxford nylon, standard nylon and heavy-duty ballistic cloth. The standard-weight bags now include an extra-large size in place of the small, and range in price from RRP \$31.50 to \$61.50, while the lightweight and heavy-duty bags come in four sizes each and are priced between RRP \$28.50 and \$68.50. In addition, the very large *Seasack* and the huge *Kanusack* are made of coated ballistic cloth and have shoulder straps attached to facilitate portaging. They cost RRP \$95 and \$155. All Ortlieb bags have welded seams and close by folding the top over a stiff strip of plastic and securing with a quick-release buckle.

D B Stuff Canyon Bags are now available in four sizes instead of three. The size range covered is much as it was, with an additional large bag selling for RRP \$23.20. Seams are welded. To close, twist the top and fasten with the shock-cord loop attached.

Such bags are useful in the rucksack as well as a canoe or raft. The choice of materials allows you to select one appropriate to your needs. All appear to be of good quality. Small repairs, if necessary, should be possible with the use of a sealant such as *Aquaseal*.

**More Stuff.** *D B Stuff*, from Berowra in New South Wales, employs the same techniques as in its Canyon Bags but uses a lighter PVC-coated nylon to make some other handy accessories. The *Packliner*, available in three sizes, is a lighter alternative to a Canyon Bag for keeping the contents of your pack dry. RRP \$17.35, \$26.70 and \$33.45 for small, medium and large, weights 170, 250 and 500 grams.

The *Packcover* and the *Water Bucket* follow very familiar designs but again use PVC-coated nylon with welded seams.

The *Pile Mitts* have a well-cum thumb, a band of rib-knit around the wrist and a small loop for the attachment of wrist leashes. About \$15.

**Grounds for Celebration.** Lovers of filtered coffee, rejoice! The designers at *Ortlieb* have taken your cause to heart and come up with a device that apes the shape of the Melitta and other plastic filter funnels but folds to fit in a billy. Made of a flexible coated material, it requires only two tent pegs for support, a filter paper and coffee to sit inside it and a second pot to receive the rich liquid. Imported by *Outdoor Agencies*. RRP \$9.95.



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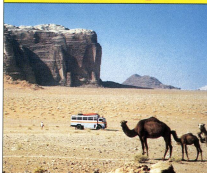
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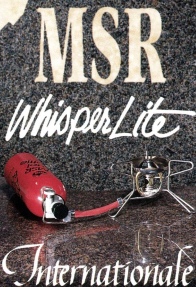
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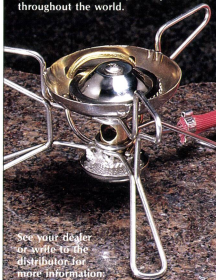
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Above. Spyderco folding knife.

**Very Cutting.** Of particular interest to white-water enthusiasts, the *Spyderco Mariner* is an impressive folding knife. Solidly constructed, entirely of stainless steel, its nine centimetre-long locking blade has a serrated edge that is reported to make short work of polypropylene rope. The knife can be opened one-handed by means of a thumb-hole in the blade and could be fastened to clothing with a sturdy spring-steel clip.

At a cost of something like \$139, plus about \$65 for the *Spyderco Tri-Angle Sharpmaker* (necessary to keep the serrated edge in good shape), this is not a knife to be trifled with. It is one of the more expensive of a sizeable range including folding and fixed blades, serrated and plain.

Spyderco made sharpeners before knives, and the Sharpmaker can be used on any knives, for domestic or outdoor use. Imported by *Zen Imports* of New South Wales.

**Layer Upon Layer.** *Berghaus Quattro* and *Tornado Inter-Active Jackets* are waterproof parkas with a little more. The *Quattro* is a jacket in two-layer Gore-Tex with a nylon lining; it has four external pockets and a hood that stows away in the collar. The *Tornado* is a thigh-length parka in three-layer Gore-Tex, very similar to the *Lightning* (see *Wild Gear Survey, Wild* no 32). Both feature an additional zipper, just inside the main opening, to which can be attached a *Berghaus* jacket made of *Polarplus* or *Polarlite*. This allows the waterproof shell and the insulating garment to

be worn individually or as one. Such sophistication does not come cheaply. The *Quattro* sells for RRP \$495 and the *Tornado* for RRP \$475, for the shell alone. They are imported from the UK by *Outdoor Agencies*.

**Rainier Than Thou.** The *Jansport Rainier* is a waterproof parka in three-layer Gore-Tex Taslan, of similar length to the *Berghaus Quattro*, with two external pockets and a hood with a generous, wire-stiffened peak. Made in Australia and distributed by *Outdoor Survival*, it sells for around \$230.

**Anklets.** Made in Melbourne, *Aiking Ankle Gaiters* are very light, short gaiters of lightly-coated Taslan nylon. Designed to keep the snow out of boots used for skiing in prepared tracks and light ski touring, they could prove suitable for warm-weather walking as well. They have an elastic top cuff and are pulled down over the boot by a broad elastic band which passes under the foot. Bright colours and combinations are available. RRP \$19.60.

For more information on gaiters see *Equipment, Wild* no 31.

**Build a Better Trapper...** The *Optimus 81 Trapper methylated spirits stove* appeared in the *Gear Survey, Wild* no 24. It was noted that for all its relative safety and reliability, the Trapper was known to dribble burning fuel if used when over-filled. That problem has now been addressed. A level control hole has been introduced to the base of the stove which allows the user to see when sufficient fuel has been added. A small plug, attached to the base by a chain to prevent its being lost, screws in to this hole for travelling. As well, the material of the base has been strengthened. This should help to ensure that base and windshield fit smoothly together. Dry weight has increased slightly, from 970 to 1,100 grams. Distributed by *Outdoor Survival*.

**Nik Off.** We noted in *Equipment, Wild* no 32, the arrival from the UK of the *Nikwax* range of waterproofing agents. *Liquid Nikwax* is a non-oily compound for use on leather gloves, shoes, clothing and bicycle saddles. It can be used in combination with *Nikwax Waterproofing Wax* on leather boots; the former occasionally, to penetrate and condition, and the latter regularly, to form a flexible coating that resists abrasion. Distributed by *Outdoor Survival*.

**Kayaks for Around Town.** Well-known Italian bootmaker, *Scarpa*, explores the fringes of the outdoor market with three models of shoes. The *Kayak* and the *Vermont* are leather casual shoes with Vibram lugged rubber soles. Both use more substantial leather than is usually seen in street shoes, and construction and finish are of the standard that has helped make *Scarpa* walking, skiing and climbing boots so popular. The *Pro City* is an eye-catching model—all right then, it's loud—with suede and heavy-duty synthetic uppers, and rubber soles that owe a lot to running shoes and a little to walking boots and conventional footwear. Prices are RRP \$209 for the *Pro City*, RRP \$239 for the boat-style *Vermont* and RRP \$259 for the more

conservatively styled *Kayak*. Imported by *Outdoor Agencies*.

**Survive New Zealand.** A stove, a cup and a billy with lid and handle, all in one pocket-sized unit—that's the claim of the *Surviv-Kit*, a new product from across the Tasman. Most varieties of solid fuel tablets can be used to fire up this small unit, approximately 100 millimetres square and 35 millimetres deep and weighing about 255 grams in stainless steel (less in aluminium). Interested distributors are invited to telephone Steve Flynn in Christchurch—(0064 3) 650 685 or 799 664. But it is tea-proof?

**Gnu Blew Too.** Blue Water II, made in the USA, has long been a well respected static rope (see *Wild Gear Survey, Wild* no 9). *Blue Water II Plus* is a new rope from the same manufacturer, who claims it is better than the original in several ways. Test results supplied by *Spelean*, the Australian distributor, suggest that overall resistance to abrasion has been increased more than four times by changing the construction of the rope's core, while flexibility and handling, which might have been expected to suffer, have also improved. One characteristic which made *Blue Water II* attractive for abseiling, hauling and rescue work was its resistance to spin; the new rope is said to be as good or better.

**Macpac Changes.** *Macpac Wilderness Equipment* of New Zealand continues to make changes and additions to its range of rucksacks, tents and sleeping bags. The new *Ravine* pack is a large-capacity model in Aztec cloth with the new, adjustable *Lightning* harness. Others have a slightly modified *Dynamic* harness. The *Minaret* is a new tunnel tent, similar to the popular *Olympus* but supported by two hoops instead of three, and lighter at 2.4 kilograms. The *Eclipse* tent has been modified to make it more secure against bad weather. *Macpac* sleeping bags are now available in an extra-large size, and there is a new lightweight model—the *Marathon*, whose 200 grams of down is all on top, leaving insulation underneath to the sleeping mat. Total weight is a paltry 500 grams.

**For Tiger Walkers?** The black and yellow *Jansport Walkabout day pack* is not for those who wish to blend in with their surroundings. Made of a fairly heavy-duty coated nylon, with a sternum strap and provision for a waist-belt to be attached, it has a small zippered pocket in the lid. The top opening is augmented by a vertical zip which gives access to the upper two-thirds of its 20 or so litres. It appears, however, that this zip would be placed under stress should the pack be loaded to capacity.

**Camalot Caution.** Readers using *Chouinard Camalots* are advised to check the aluminium alloy members joining the two axles for fractures. Units showing any sign of damage should be returned to the supplier for inspection.

New products (on loan to *Wild*) and/or information about them, including colour slides, are welcome for possible review in this department. Written items should be typed, include recommended retail prices and preferably not exceed 200 words. Send to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.



# BUNYIP BOOTS



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# Tasmania on the Cheap

A new approach to coffee-table publications

**Tasmania—A Wild Beauty** by Roddy Maclean and Dennis Harding (Regal Press, 1989, RRP \$39.95).

A Tasmanian wilderness coffee-table book with a difference, *Tasmania* is being marketed, heavily (at least in Tasmania, where it was published), as being exceptional value for money. In fact, the rather basic-looking promotional material prepared by the publisher goes so far as to claim it as 'the book they said couldn't be done!'. (Sounds like a Dick Smithism.)

Writer Maclean and photographer Harding are well known, particularly to *Wild* readers, for their Tasmanian writing and photography. Has their work been compromised in this attempt 'to print a full colour book in Australia and still retail a book at a more competitive price than an overseas printed alternative'?

First, the photos. They're generally excellent, very well reproduced and there's plenty of 'em. You can't ask for much more on that score.

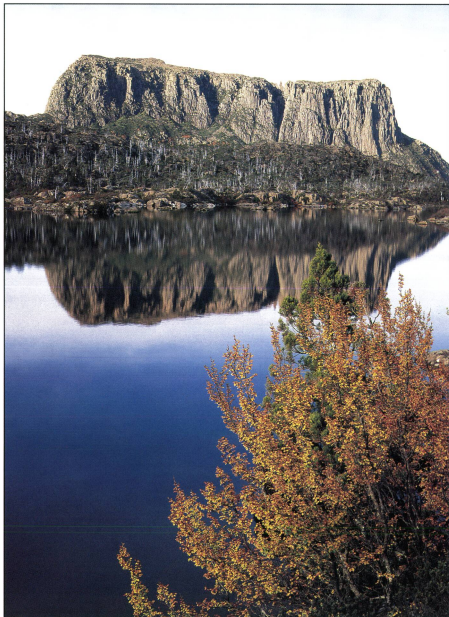
The text is an interesting and detailed history of human impact on, and exploration of, the Tasmanian landscape. It is sandwiched between opening and closing chapters which, essentially, make a plea for (Tasmanian) wilderness. The writing is likely to greatly interest and appeal to many who've walked Tasmania's wild places.

A third essential ingredient of any publication, especially a coffee-table book, is design and physical construction. Peter Dombrovskis's publications are generally reckoned to set a standard. Much of this, of course, is due to the obvious quality of his photos. But his meticulous attention to production detail plays a very significant part. In this regard, *Tasmania* is not in the Dombrovskis league. The publisher would have been well advised to invest in the services of a graphic designer experienced in quality books. The result would have been so much more aesthetically, and possibly even commercially, pleasing if greater attention had been paid to design and particularly typesetting which, at best, imparts a 'rustic' flavour. Similarly, more care over materials used, particularly for the covers and end-papers, might have paid dividends.

Overall, however, whilst *Tasmania* may not meet the production standards of the most jaded aficionados of Tasmanian wilderness literature, it is not a bad job and the price is reasonable. If this enables it to reach a wider audience and tell why Tasmania's wild places must be saved, then *Tasmania* has done a superb job.

Chris Baxter

**Croajingolong, Great Barrier Reef, Inland Salt Lakes and Kimberley** (Wilderness Society, 1989, RRP \$10 each).



**Above**, the Acropolis from Lake Elysia, Tasmania. Photo by Dennis Harding, reproduced from *Tasmania—A Wild Beauty*.

These are the Wilderness Society's latest posters. Among the first works done for the society by former *Wild* Art Director, Michael Collie, they bear his stamp with characteristics that will be familiar to *Wild* readers, including liberal use of condensed type and drop shadows, not to mention 'warm' colours. Collie is also encouraging the society to make good

use of its distinctive 'trade mark'—the green triangle introduced during the Franklin River campaign.

The posters? Superbly reproduced scenes from the *Wilderness Society Calendar 1990*. They deserve to do well. Interestingly, none depicts mountain or forest country.

(Collie has also designed the society's latest bumper sticker—'Kakadu: too precious to mine'. At \$1.20 it's well worth getting as the graphics are outstanding and humorous.)

CB





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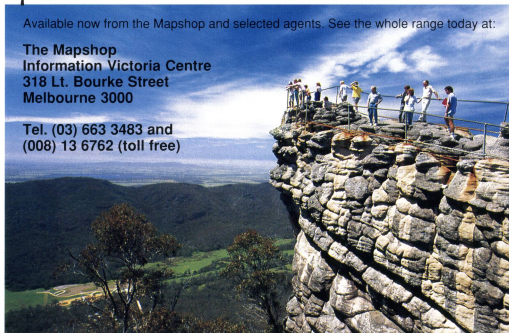
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Above, rockhopper penguins. Photo by Nigel Brothers, reproduced from Australian Wildlife Calendar 1989.

**Australian Wildlife Calendar 1990** (Wilderness Society, RRP \$11.95). **Wilderness Society Calendar 1990** (Wilderness Society, RRP \$11.95).

This year the Wilderness Society has sought to get a jump on competitors in the crowded wilderness calendar market by releasing its calendars for the following year even earlier than usual.

*Wildlife* is an absolute sizzler—probably the best yet, and that's saying something. The photos are all very good, with a few being absolutely outstanding, and well varied.

The appearance of the society's staple classic, the *Wilderness Society Calendar*, is eagerly awaited each year. For 1990 it's very much 'business as usual'—the fans won't be disappointed and there is a refreshing variety of locations portrayed.

CB

**Cross-country Navigation** by Neil Phillips, Rod Phillips and Graham Foley (Outdoor Recreation in Australia, 1989, RRP \$25.95).

After ascertaining exactly which book I was reading (the 'blurb', spine and cover disagreed), I became captivated by the contents.

*Cross-country Navigation* is the best of its genre that I have read and gives a comprehensive introduction and extended information on the sport of 'rogaining'. 'What?', many will ask. Well, it is defined as the sport of long-distance cross-country navigation in which teams (of two to five members) visit as many check-points as possible within 24 hours.

It is conveniently and successfully divided in to three parts: basic navigation, advanced navigation and rogaining. Each is a fact-filled mini-volume. These three parts are augmented by appendices, tables and, interestingly, valuable case studies. So often when reading a text on navigational skills it all

happens with map and compass in the clinical, blank environment of the pages. The several case studies in this book give an actual 'feel' and crystallize some of the lessons which have been presented in the first two parts.

Having participated in a couple of rogaines (including a 24-hour event), I feel that this book covers (almost exhausts) all aspects of the sport. I did enjoy (see philosophy discussion, page 131) the overall experience, especially the catering. It is good to see that the authors recommend bus transport to and from events (pages 110–11)...imagine the driving ability of a rogafter after a 24-hour event.

I was surprised there was no discussion of some of the more recent evolutions of rogaining—notably 'snoogaing' and 'cyclogaining'. Having participated in two excellent snoogaing events (at Lake Mountain and Mt Baw Baw), I found them highly enjoyable and a logical and practical extension to the theory outlined in this book.



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Perhaps the biggest single problem is the misleading advertising on the back cover. The two testimonials (from the *Age*, and the *West Australian*) relate to an earlier book. This updated, new version has not yet undergone critical scrutiny. When it finally does, the literary pedants may not be too excited, but I'm sure around-the-clock navigators will be off in search of the 'control' that has copies for sale.

Jeff Williams

**If That Man Comes Here, I'll Shoot Him** edited by Rosemary Curry (published by the author, 1989, RRP \$4.00).

Australia's high country holds fond memories for many. Harry Stephenson has notably recalled the history of the mountain cattlemen in a number of fascinating books. But what did the women do? What are their memories?

Rosemary Curry is to be congratulated on compiling the story of two women of the high country who were probably amongst the first to grace its mountains and to love the Main Range for its subtle, enigmatic beauty. Gladys Weston and Emily McGufficke, both daughters of George Wallace of Jindabyne, relate to Curry their memories of snakes, dingoes and smoke signals, the simple pleasure of Vegemite and Sao biscuits for lunch, and the occasional angst of isolation. They recall with clarity each season's challenge, the sheer joy of the summer alpine flowers, the danger of horseback riding in fog and the hazards of being caught in the early snows.

Nearly half the book contains Gladys Wallace's fine poems, written in the tradition of Dorothea McKellar. Some were composed while riding and written by candle-light on return to the hut. Others were noted in contemplation of the stillness of the mountain air while the men were away. These poems reveal a woman of thoughtfulness and integrity, grateful for the freedom of the mountains but also well aware that this freedom was limited.

Easy to read, these fascinating memories are contained in a compact black-and-white production of 44 pages. At such a low price, it is well worth the money.

Philippa Lohmeyer

**Licola-Wellington** 1 : 50,000 (Vicmap, 1989, RRP \$6.95).

The Licola-Wellington map is printed in four colours and covers the area between the Macalister and Avon Rivers. It includes the popular bushwalking areas around Lake Tali Karng, Gable End, Mt Wellington and Moroka Hut, and is presented at a useful 1 : 50,000 scale.

Glenn van der Knijff

**Bogong Alpine Area** 1 : 50,000 (Vicmap, 1989, RRP \$6.95).

Covering one of the State's most popular bushwalking and ski-touring areas, *Bogong Alpine Area* is the latest map produced as part of Victoria's Outdoor Leisure Series. Other than a few significant errors (including the incorrect spelling of the cover photographer's name, and Black Possum Spur being printed as Summ Spur), the map is good.

It has been compiled from the 1 : 25,000

series maps and covers almost the entire Bogong National Park, except for the extreme southern sector. Well printed in full colour, the 1 : 50,000 scale is excellent for walkers and skiers, and the map is likely to supersede all others which cover the same area. As well, the reverse side includes some brief track notes, park information and maps of Mt Hotham, Falls Creek, Bright and Mt Beauty. An assortment of colour photographs adds to the map's presentation.

Bogong enthusiasts will find it hard to resist.

GvdK

**Kiandra District** 1 : 25,000 (ACT Rogaining Association in association with David Hogg Maps, 1989, RRP \$7.20, including postage, from PO Box 213, Jamieson, ACT 2614).

Based on the Central Mapping Authority's popular 1 : 25,000 series, David Hogg has prepared this map specifically for the Silva Mountain Marathon and the ACT Rogaining Association. As a result, the locational information presented should be accurate.

Bushwalkers and ski tourists will also find this map useful. Printed in four colours, it covers the area from Cabramurra east to Tabletop Mountain (including Mt Selwyn) and north to Kiandra and the Six Mile Diggings.

GvdK

**Sunset Country, Snow Gums, River Red Gums and Point Hicks** (National Trust, 1989, RRP \$10 each).

These are four posters in a series and represent a cross-section of Victoria's natural heritage. They are superbly printed on glossy paper and will look good on any wall. All photographs are taken by well-known wilderness photographer David Tatnall.

GvdK

**Northern Grampians and Southern Grampians** 1 : 50,000 (Vicmap, 1989, RRP \$6.95 each).

Visitors to western Victoria's popular bushwalking and rockclimbing area, the Grampians, have long been faced with the choice between acquiring seemingly dozens of 1 : 25,000 maps or a glorified road-map. The publication of these full-colour, contour maps more or less does the job on just two sheets, and does it well.

*Northern Grampians* covers from Mt Zero in the north to the Battlemates; *Southern Grampians* from just south of the Battlemates to Mt Abrupt. Outliers, including Mt Talbot, Black Ians Rocks, the Black Range and Mt Sturgeon, miss the cartographical bus. The maps are generally excellent, however, and should well meet the needs of bushwalkers and climbers despite a few, mostly minor, errors including misplacing Red Rock north-east of its true location and imprecision in locating Barbican Rocks.

CB

**Other Titles Received**  
**Deep into Blue Holes: The Story of the Andros Project** by Robert Palmer (Unwin Hyman, 1989, RRP \$39.95).  
**Reconciliation** by Jeremy Griffith (Centre for Humanity's Adulthood, 1989).

Publications for possible review are welcome. Send them to the Editor, Wild, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

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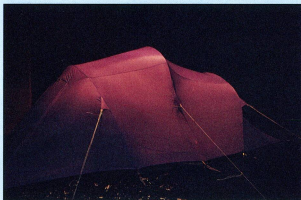
	Bushgear Jagungal	Macpac Olympus
Style	3-hoop, integral-pitch	3-hoop, integral-pitch
Poles	9.5 mm 7001-T6 aluminium	9.0 mm 7075-T9 aluminium
Hydrostatic head, fly	1,800 mm	1,000 mm
inner	100 mm	400 mm
floor	1,900 mm	2,000 mm
Seam sealing	fly	No
floor	Yes	Yes
Wind tunnel tests	by Technisearch at RMIT, Melbourne. Wind speed is that experienced over the tent roof taking the 'blocking' effect and orientation of the tent in to account.	
Head-on	buckling	108.8
failure	120.7	99.1
Side-on	buckling	103.3
failure	133.5	113.8
Fabric and seam failure	No	93.7
Rec retail price	\$450	No
		\$618

**Photos**  
RMIT wind tunnel  
taken by Technisearch.  
Windspeed 100 km/h  
Side-on test (45°)

Jagungal



Olympus



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# Huff 'n' Puff

Wildfire

## Tent survey blown away in wind tunnel?

I cannot voice too strongly my objection to Simon Head's tent survey in *Wild* no 33. In my opinion the survey is based on bias and supposition and there is no evidence to support many of its findings.

Due to the survey's possible detrimental effect on products manufactured and/or distributed by this company, we had a series of wind-tunnel tests conducted by qualified engineers in a leading Australian testing facility. We tested the Bushgear Jagungal, the Macpac Olympus and the Wild Country Quasar and Giant Quasar. Furthermore, water-head tests have been conducted on the fabrics used in these tents.

The following are examples of errors in your survey:

1 Poles. In our wind-tunnel tests the Korean poles used in both the Bushgear and Wild Country tents performed equally in all respects to Macpac's Easton (USA) poles. The front poles on the Jagungal and Olympus both failed in the same place and at the same wind velocity.

2 Materials and workmanship. All Bushgear and Wild Country fabrics undergo illumination testing for material flaws and hydrostatic testing for waterproofness. Every tent is fully assembled and inspected. The concept that Korean manufacture, materials and technology are inferior to those of the rest of the world defies common sense. For example, water-head tests gave the Olympus fly a result of 1,000 millimetres compared with 1,900 millimetres for the Jagungal and Wild Country flys. None of the tents tested displayed any defects in materials or sewing. No differences in workmanship could be detected.

3 Wind tolerance. The wind-tolerance column in the table of Simon Head's survey was not explained or defined in his general comments. In allocating points for wind tolerance, Head awarded four to Olympus, three to Quasar and two to Jagungal. The wind-tunnel tests showed the Jagungal, which has a slightly different profile to the Olympus, performs slightly better in the 70-130 kilometres per hour range. Both tents failed instantly when the 130 kph range was introduced. Both failed at the same time and place (front pole). So to suggest that the Olympus is twice as wind tolerant as the Jagungal is pure fantasy. Both Quasars performed far better in the 70-130 kph range and withstood 130 kph for some time before failing at that wind speed. The Quasar design exhibited superior performance in wind velocities over 70 kph and is clearly a better choice for more severe conditions.

4 Snow shedding. How can effectively identical tents have different ratings—Sting and Quasar, Olympus and Jagungal?

5 Quality. On this subject, Head appears to suggest that 'If it's Korean, it's no good'. To suggest that Korean copies or original Korean tents *per se* are always inferior is pure conjecture. Hard evidence strongly suggests that this is not the case. The quality of a tent is a reflection of design, components and

workmanship. One reason many respected designers and manufacturers throughout the world manufacture high quality tents in Korea is that there is a labour force particularly skilled in making specialist tents, and ample local supply of world-class fabrics and components.

At Bushgear we manufacture most of our products in Australia, namely the Bushgear and Mountain Designs brands. The only reason we don't make our tents here is that the duty rate on the necessary imported fabrics is considerably in excess of that on finished tents. The reason that most tents made in the Southern Hemisphere come from New Zealand is that, due to another Australian Customs anachronism, New Zealand tents are imported duty free, and New Zealand manufacturers are not required to pay duty on their fabric.

As you know, this is not the first time we've been dissatisfied with *Wild* gear surveys. We resent the fact that it is difficult to defend yourself when you feel that your company's products are on the 'bad end' of a survey which draws unsubstantiated conclusions. We further resent the time and money expended in having unbiased, professional and scientific tests and measurements carried out to set the record straight.

We have been in the rucksack sports business for 20 years, and it has always been the aim of this company to design and manufacture products of the highest quality. Our gear helped put Australians on their first Himalayan summit and the first Australians on Everest. Most recently, we provided all the sleeping bags and insulated clothing for the successful Ice Walk to the North Pole. In each case our equipment received the highest commendation. We are not afraid of detailed, unbiased testing or analysis of our products, the bulk of which are manufactured in Australia, although the choice of the country in which we manufacture a product in no way alters our standards.

Rick White  
Managing Director  
Bushgear Australia Pty Ltd  
Brisbane, Qld

### The Kama Sutra or Wild?

...My first encounter with *Wild* was more than three years ago. Even then it hugely impressed me. All those exotic names and photos so fired a 22-year-old's imagination that I queued up in front of the Australian Embassy in Delhi, all starry eyed, to lap up more information.

A year later, while on a casual hike, we were staying for a night in that charming castle (*Not your average cattleman's hut!* Editor) at Naggar. Sitting on its balcony, overhanging a precipitous drop to the Kulu valley, we decided to celebrate. So a bottle of rum (a gift from a friend in the air force) came out of hiding in the rucksack. When a curious face popped out of the next room, its owner was heartily invited to join the gang. After prolonged scrutiny of the bottle, he decided to take a chance. As it

turned out, our fellow traveller, Ron, was fresh from Australia. We were informed that our man had been off drink for the past six months and, having tasted our 'rum and tap-water', he decided to stay off it for the rest of his visit...

Pretty soon we were deliberating upon the beauty of Federation Peak. The Franklin River campaign figured prominently and we touched upon such peripheral issues as the political overtones of the green movement. Needless to say, my repertoire was essentially based on *Wild*. Ron, nevertheless, was much impressed with 'my geography' and I let it pass at that...

*Wild* is sleek now, with superior graphics. It's a refreshingly original production. Better still to find the Managing Editor smiling away for posterity from the Editorial page. Mr Chris Baxter's got a winner of a smile and a superb magazine to carry it—that's pretty potent material I'd say! I'll second Mr Ian Humphry for him (*Wildfire*, *Wild* no 31)...

P Ghosal  
Lucknow, India

**'That Most Maligned Mansfield Operator'**  
I have recently returned from a week's cross country skiing with a group of students from Western Australia. It was their first encounter with mountains. How clearly did they see the need to preserve these beautiful places.

We stayed at the Bluff Hut, that terrible blight on the landscape whose 'mysterious' addition is shown in a most misleading pair of photographs in *Wild* no 32 [sic]. (*We are not aware of any valid reason why these photos might be considered 'most misleading'* Editor) We had with us three very competent, careful and conservation-minded people provided by that most maligned Mansfield operator (who has not had his over-snow vehicle on the Bluff for three seasons).

I have had small groups of students camping in summer on the Bluff...for many years. Introducing young people to an area like this, where there is the security of a hut if needed, is the best way I know of educating them of the critical need to preserve our wilderness areas and to encourage them to think about ways of protecting our natural environment.

Many an ill-prepared walker and skier has been grateful for the hut's existence. Many a young person has begun from the Bluff a life-long, all-season affair with the mountains. So I think it is sad that an exclusive handful of skiers and walkers, whose views are so frequently represented in your magazine, give such a one-sided view to the issue of Bluff Hut and to those who use it and care for it.

Margaret Nikolajuk  
Fitzroy, Vic

### Tuned In

Andrew Barnes's article on ski tuning (*Wild* no 33) emphasizes the need for skiers not to rely on factory tuning if they want the best from their skis.

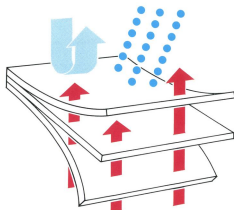
Two Karhu skis are singled out as examples of popular skis with poor edge-finish.



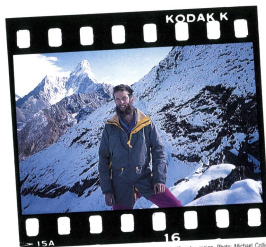
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Michael Colles wearing Paddy Pallin Vettec jacket in Khumbu region. Photo: Michael Colles collection

your perspiration vapour to escape. Garments made from Gore-Tex fabric are both windproof and waterproof. Because perspiration vapour passes through the membrane you stay dry, comfortable and safe while active or at rest—

protected from wind, rain, snow and your own perspiration.



Mountain Design Status jacket, Towad 1989. Photo: M. Bredel

**The fabric is waterproof, but what about the seams?** Garments made from any waterproof material are only as waterproof as the seams. The seams of all garments made from Gore-Tex fabric are permanently sealed and strengthened during manufacture with Gore-Tex seam-sealing tape and hot-air-welding equipment.

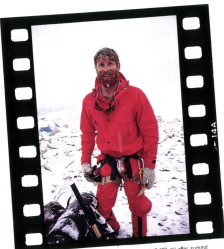


J&H Camcor jacket, Lisa Nicholas, Telmerok skiing, Verber. Photo: Mark Shapiro

**What should I wear under my Gore-Tex fabric garment?** Whatever you like. You'll probably start with synthetic long underwear to wick perspiration moisture away from your skin. Simply add layers, depending upon how much insulation you need to stay comfortable,

making adjustments to suit the weather and your level of activity.

**Will I sweat in Gore-Tex fabric garments?** Of course, just as we can when wearing a T-shirt or nothing at all. The hotter we get, the more we perspire. However, whenever you need weatherproof protection you'll be drier inside a 'breathing' Gore-Tex fabric garment.



Peter Lane wearing Wilderness Equipment suit, Camp 1 (5480 m) after summit attempt on Saragat. Photo: Will Sargent

**Is Gore-Tex durable?** As well as providing unrivalled protection and comfort, the laminated membrane liquid-barrier outlasts any conventional fabric-proofing. Gore-Tex fabric requires no special laundering. A garment can be cleaned by standard machine washing using powder detergent. W L Gore and Associates offer a three-year warranty on Gore-Tex fabrics used in garments bearing the Gore-Tex fabric warranty tag. Garments carrying our warranty tag are the most reliable, waterproof, windproof, and breathable you can buy. We guarantee it.



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Unfortunately, in the past some skis have emerged from the factory leaving rather more tuning to the purchaser than either the purchaser or Karhu would like. This problem has been recognized by the factory in Canada, and this year new stone-grinding equipment has been installed to improve the finish on metal-edge Karhu Kinetic skis.

As Australians, we often feel our comments to overseas suppliers are ignored, and at least in this case Andrew Barnes and Wild have been heard. Karhu Canada has posted both French and English copies of the article around the factory for employee discussion and training purposes.

John Anson  
Managing Director  
Nordic Traders  
(Australian importer of Karhu skis)  
West Heidelberg, Vic

### Paddle Power

I was interested to read in *Wild* no 32 about canoeing the Snowy River from Charlottes Pass to Guthega Pondage. We did this same trip in December 1981, using three- and four-person rafts, after the big snow season.

The trip was meant to be a gentle initiation to rafting prior to one down the Franklin River... This was not to be. The rapids were continuous grade three and four, with no pools or slow-moving sections, and included a three metre drop.

Of the six of us who started, only one went the whole way, and even he finished up without a paddle. All our paddles except one were broken or lost, and one raft had the bottom ripped out...

Tim McGrath  
East Lindfield, NSW

As a subscriber from almost the inception of your publication, I have always looked forward to receipt date, and enjoy the articles. While primarily interested in canoeing, I generally manage to read from 'cover to cover'. However, I would like to comment on two articles that have appeared in recent issues, in order to highlight safety aspects...

Firstly, in *Wild* no 27 (Track Notes, 'Paddling the Clarence Gorge'), Yvonne McLaughlin writes, 'However, paddlers should pull out well before the final fall, as it would be very serious if anyone was accidentally swept over it'. This fall, known locally as Rainbow Falls, has claimed quite a number of lives in the time that I have resided in Grafton—both in spate periods and normal times—mainly because a paddler approaching gets very little warning that there is indeed a major drop ahead. The nature of the course of the river reduces the usual roar associated with a major drop and there is no 'horizon line' as the fall drops in to a 'hole'...

My second comment concerns the photograph on page 38 of *Wild* no 32 which shows a paddler in a canoe above a rapid, with his buoyancy vest not fastened... the potential danger of this act left me with 'goose bumps'...

Don Tomlinson  
South Grafton, NSW

Readers' letters are welcome (with sender's full name and address, for verification). A selection will be published in this column. Letters of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Write to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

## DYNAMIC ROPES

	Diam mm	UIAA Falls
Enduro	11.0	10
Flashpoint	10.5	8
Lightning	10.0	6
Rock Serpent	9.0	12
Revolution	8.5	7-8

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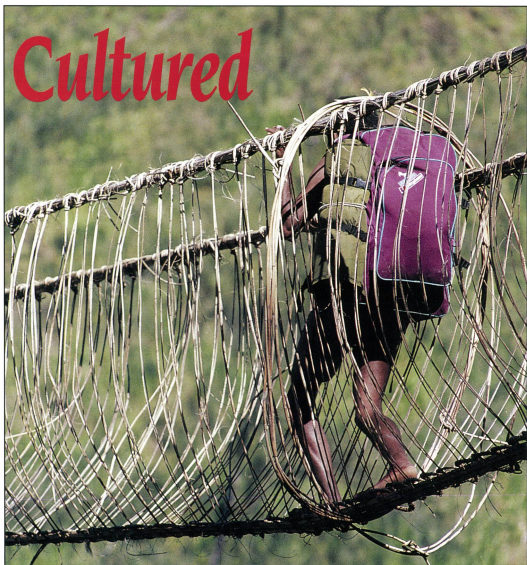


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Crossing the Strickland Gorge, PNG Highlands. Photo: Jonathan Chester



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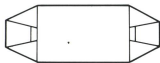
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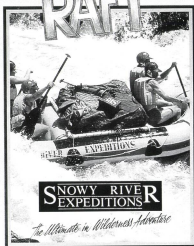
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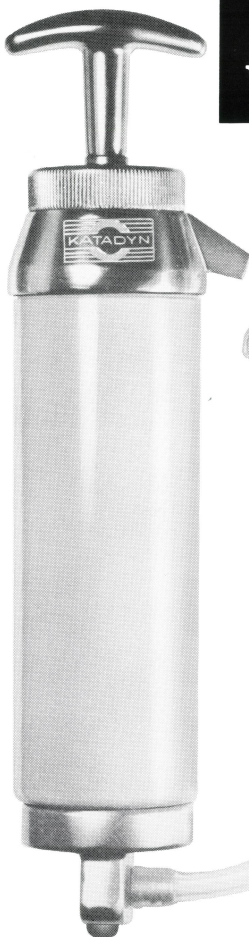
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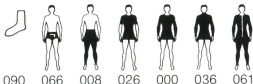


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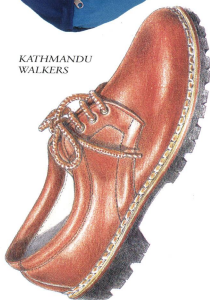
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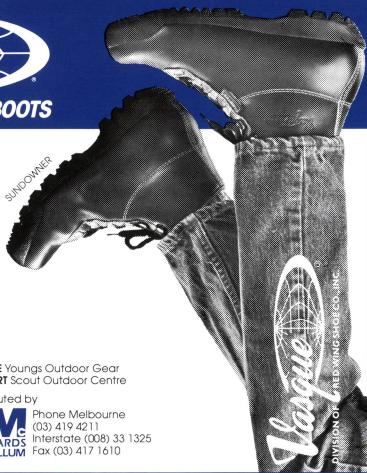
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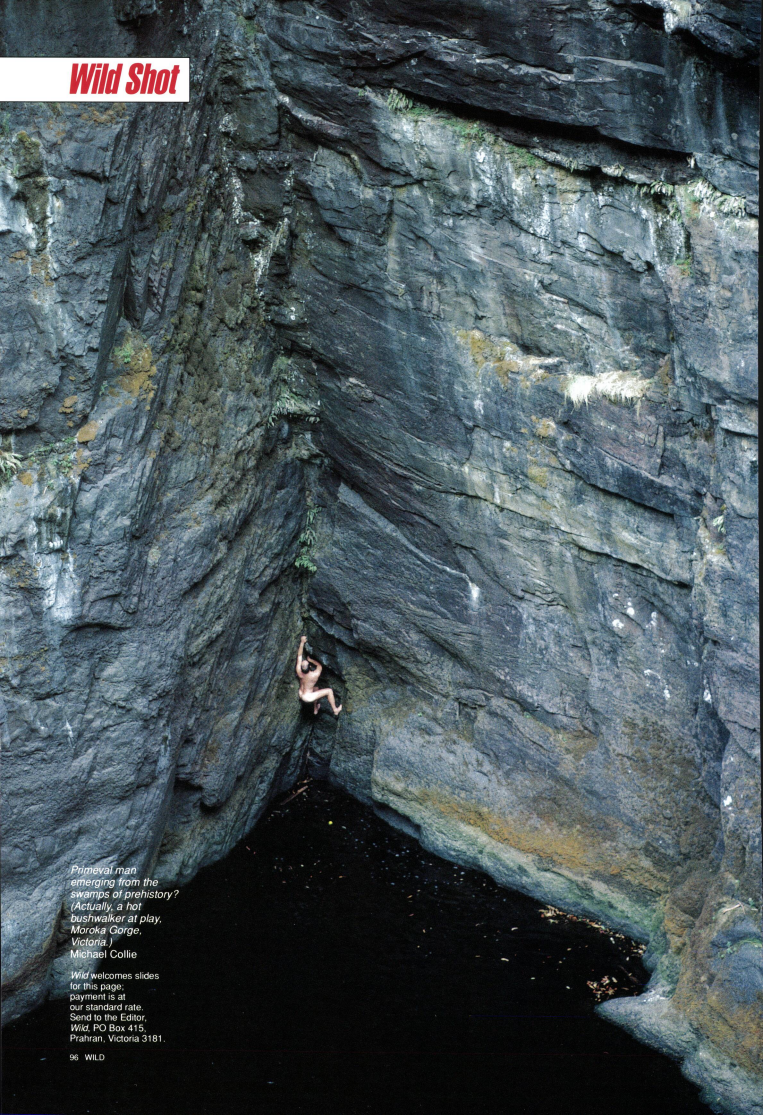
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## Wild Shot

A full-page photograph of a person climbing a dark, layered rock face. The person is a small figure in the lower-left quadrant, clinging to a vertical crack in the rock. The rock face is composed of dark, horizontal layers, possibly sandstone or shale, with some patches of moss or lichen. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of the rock and the climber. The bottom of the image fades into black.

Primeval man  
emerging from the  
swamps of prehistory?  
(Actually, a hot  
bushwalker at play,  
Moroka Gorge,  
Victoria.)  
Michael Collie

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